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CLAIMS OF THE COUNTRY

ON

AMERICAN FEMALES.

BY

MISS COXE,

AUTHOR OF THE "YOUNG LADY'S COMPANION," "THE WONDERS OF THE DEEP," "THE INFANT BROTHER," ETC., ETC.

VOL. II.

COLUMBUS: ISAAC N. WHITING.

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CHAPTER I.

FEMALE INFLUENCE EXTENDED, BY PECULIARITIES IN THE POLITICAL
AND SOCIAL RELATIONS OF THE UNITED STATES.

If it be an indisputable fact, that women enjoying the light of Protestant christianity, uniformly rank higher in the social community, and exert a wider influence in the promotion of its highest interests, than under any other form of religious belief, it may be well to enquire if there be any distinctive features in the institutions, manners and customs of America, calculated to render the relations of its females in any wise peculiar; or more important than those held by their sex in other countries, enjoying equality of religious privileges.

It is a truth perceptible to every tolerably reflecting mind, that under the republican form of government established in America, the will of its subjects has been clothed with a power greatly transcending what their fellow men are capable of exercising, in countries, whose political relations grow out of the establishment of a despotic government, or even of a limited monarchy. Our constitution was, it is well known, the fruit of deep deliberation on the part of the chosen representatives of the country, who after mature consideration, and a solemn appeal for divine guidance, framed its several articles and sent it forth to the nation, to be received by it, as the formal manifestation of the wishes of the people, in regard to the

political principles, according to which they desired to govern and to be governed.

The constitution having been designed ever to be considered as identical with the expressed will of the majority of the people, to them was committed the power of determining on the conduct of those who might be selected as the agents in executing the various official acts growing out of it. The citizens of the United States were to decide from time to time, whether their elected rulers, maintained or infringed upon their rights; they were empowered, when any exigency of circumstances rendered it expedient so to do, to alter or modify any of the articles of the constitution, either in whole or part; in short they were considered as commissioned watchmen, stationed on the battlements erected for the defence of America, and were expected thence, with scrutinizing glance, to mark the operations of the political machine, and to note every movement which indicated, either inherent defect in its construction, ignorance, or wilful obliquity of principle in those delegated by their country to superintend and regulate its movements.

Under these circumstances, it has evidently been made pre-eminently important, that the minds of the American people should be kept in a healthy condition, and be swayed habitually by pure principles and sound sense. Indeed, the wise and virtuous founders of our constitution, animated as they were themselves, by high and ennobling motives of action, seem to have taken it for granted, that those who in after times, should sway the councils and enforce the laws of their country, would be men like-minded with themselves. Washington, with the humility of a truly great mind, thought not that others who should be selected as his successors to the highest office of the

executive government, would find it more difficult than he had done to be influenced uniformly by virtuous principles, or to exercise power with moderation. The father of our country, and his distinguished associates, in framing the executive, legislative and judicial branches of the government, acted under the supposition that their posterity, would sedulously seek to preserve the interests of the land,—to ensure whose independence, so many noble lives had been consecrated, and so much gallant blood had been expended,—by such a prompt and cheerful obedience to lawful authority, as might render it a national blessing, that the articles of the constitution had been so framed, that they might derive their chief strength from the formal expression of the will of the people. Accordingly, with these expectations, no provision was made amongst its articles, to meet the state of things which must be the inevitable result, if the time shall ever arrive, when the mass of our citizens shall be found deficient in sound moral principle, or wanting in proper intelligence.

Many indeed, have been heard in our halls of legislation, and elsewhere, through the agency of the press, strenuously exerting themselves to convince the public, of the paramount importance to the nation, of the preservation, and still farther advancement of the intellectual character of the people, as if this was all that was necessary to our stability as a nation. But in framing a constitution for the country, whose independence they had so dearly purchased, our patriot forefathers constructed it not subject to this contingency, viz: when intellect should be exalted in idolatrous estimation, by ascribing to it a power, which the experience of past and present ages, proves it can never possess as a means of national conservation, unless it be closely associated with, and held in subordination to

sound moral principle. It was, as we observed previously, during the ages, when the most rigid system of pagan morality was scrupulously observed, that Rome, from a state of mediocrity among the surrounding nations, rose to pre-eminence and stability of power; it was during the Augustan age of her history, when intellectuality was most strongly impressed upon the minds of her citizens, that her splendor and fame began to wane, until at length “she fell under the very pile which she had been seeking to rear for her own glory.”

This truth was so apparent to minds enlightened only by the dim torch which pagan morality provides for her followers, that the historian Polybius, when counselling his countrymen of Greece, from data drawn from Roman history, sagaciously remarked, “they have *wisely established the fear of hell*, and those who oppose this doctrine at the present day are without good arguments.”

If the heathen statesmen, legislators and philosophers of Rome, in her most prosperous era, concurred in the opinion that the cultivation of sentiments of religious veneration were most important to the conservation of the prosperity of a republic; if the articles of our own constitution are based on this principle, and no provision has been made by it for the absence of such moral healthfulness in the community; if Washington and Franklin cautioned us publicly against supposing, that prosperity could be maintained, without a recognition by our citizens of their obligations to divine guidance, it would seem a certain truth, that in our republic, nothing should be considered of such imperative obligation by its citizens, as the cultivation of sound morality.

But as the condition of man’s soul is diseased, and since but one sufficient remedy has been provided for it, and

that is contained in the gospel of our Redeemer; and moreover, as experience and observation have abundantly proved, that this sovereign panacea can most effectually be made to operate on the moral constitution, by having it inwrought in the system from the earliest dawnings of consciousness, then it would seem self-evident, taking all these reasons into consideration, that woman's position in this country, as the authorized and accredited agent of her God, in the accomplishment of the spiritual regeneration of His creatures, is one of peculiar responsibility.

There are peculiarities too in our social condition, incident to our circumstances, as compared with other nations, which seem not a little to enhance the obligations resting on American women, to be faithful to their country, by being faithful to their God. While our constitution considers all the citizens of the United States, as entitled to equal and independent rights, experience proves them to be with few exceptions, under a positive necessity of making exertions for the support of themselves and their families; no privileged *classes* are to be found within our borders, who by succession to hereditary wealth are exempt from professional or mechanical labors of some sort; but from the highest offices of our government, down to those engaged in subordinate branches of mechanical, agricultural or manufacturing employments, all ranks of our male citizens, in early and middle life at least, are obliged, with few exceptions, to labor in their respective avocations. Consequently, our children are consigned during the early and most impressionable period of their existence, to a far greater extent to maternal influence, than would be the case, did the fathers of our land enjoy the same leisure for domestic intercourse, as the male heads of families in the older countries of Europe. It is by no means uncommon,

to find professional men of our country, as well as those engaged in mechanical pursuits, considering the hours passed round the social board, irrespective of the Sabbath, as those only which they are privileged to spend with their families. Experience and common sense, must however, teach us, that these are not the seasons in which the most favorable opportunities are presented, either for the development of youthful character, or for the establishment of domestic discipline, by which the minds of children are to be restrained in their evil tendencies, and fostered in the more amiable traits which still remain among the ruins of our fallen nature to show what was the beauty of its original formation, or instructed, line by line, and precept by precept, in those great truths, on the hearty reception of which, must inevitably depend the securing by sinful mortals, an entrance into that eternal and perfect state of existence, which will alone be commensurate with the far-reaching desires of immortal beings.

To American mothers, and in their absence, to the female relations or friends deputed to supply their place in the domestic circle, is then committed, in a special manner, the solemn responsibility of watching over the hearts and minds of our youthful citizens, who are soon to take their places on the public arena, and to give form and individuality to our national character. There are, however, I conceive, other peculiarities in the organization of our society, besides what has been already specified, consequent, perhaps, to a considerable degree, on the freshness of our existence as a nation, which render the vigilant supervision of enlightened feminine minds most important during the early lifetime of the sons and daughters of this republic.

The American Constitution presupposes, that its citizens

will be practical politicians, competent to form such judgment of men and measures, as will enable them to give in their votes, not as the blind followers of a party leader, but as intelligent and moral beings, accountable to the Supreme Legislator of the Universe, for the exercise of their powers of reason, and their decisions in respect to those, by whom they desire their country's dearest interests to be regulated. But how exceedingly incompetent will the rising generation of our citizens be for the discharge of these momentous duties, if no home provision be made for the development of their moral and intellectual powers; since the business of juvenile education, the guardianship of our youth in early life, at least among the hardy yeomanry of our western and eastern states, on whom the great dependance of the nation, humanly speaking, is to be placed, is now too generally consigned to instructors, often illy disciplined themselves, and consequently unprepared to appreciate the importance of their office, or to carry on any systematic plan for the cultivation of their pupils' hearts and minds. I do by no means pretend to say that there are not many honorable exceptions to this state of things, but would merely assert what in general is undeniably true. Let any one but glance around, not at our collegiate institutions, or at the long established seminaries of our cities and populous villages, but at the teachers of the majority of schools of whom he or she may have had opportunities of forming a correct judgment. The anxious desire for the accumulation of wealth, which has so often arrested the attention of foreigners, and has been noted down by them as a characteristic feature of the American mind, no doubt operates powerfully in aggravating this evil. It is too often found the chief consideration, by which the minds of individuals

are induced to assume the responsible office of teachers, without being in anywise prepared to discharge such duties. It further stimulates them to cater to the public taste, by setting forth in commendatory terms, an imposing summary of arts, sciences, and accomplishments to be taught by them, in a more easy and expeditious manner, than has ever before been attempted, and the climax of self-recommendation may not unfrequently be found in the notification of the moderate terms demanded by them for tuition. While such inadequate attention shall continue to be paid throughout our community, to the character of the teachers of the mass of our elementary schools, it must necessarily follow that the political, moral, and religious influence diffused by them, must be immeasurably lessened; and that the country must appeal to the mothers of the American youth with increased earnestness, to discharge a most important office in endeavoring to establish and confirm the minds of those committed to their guardianship, in the recognition of those intuitive principles of belief, or what are generally classed under the head of first truths of intellectual and moral philosophy, which form a necessary part of the mental constitution, when the mind is in a sound state. This point will be considered more at length in a subsequent chapter, and I would now only remark, in reference to this part of our subject, that it is a remarkable fact, that we can find no record of any writer, such as Hume, having persevered until death, in maintaining sophistical sentiments, and who has bequeathed to posterity writings calculated to exert a malign influence on public sentiment, by overturning the fabric of the gospel system, who had in early life been systematically taught by a pious and sensible mother, to recognise with unhesitating confidence those fundamental

truths, which our merciful Creator implanted in the soul of man, to direct him in the discharge of his moral, social, and intellectual relations, and which he designed, should be felt and acted on equally by all classes of mankind without regard to their powers or habits of reasoning. A sound and well balanced state of mind, desirable and important at all times, is specially so to a people the peculiar features of whose government, particularly require the exercise of honesty and integrity of principle, and of sober practical wisdom; and yet notwithstanding, in the legislative provision made by the different states for the promotion of education among our citizens, attention seems to have been directed almost solely to the mere mechanical routine of instruction, to the exclusion of systematic efforts to develope the intellectual and moral nature.

Maternal piety and wisdom is still further important in its bearings on our national well-being, by the peculiarly unsettled habits of many of our countrymen. The surface of society in a large section of the Union, is, from this circumstance, kept continually in a state of fluctuation, so that no influences out of the domestic circle, can be brought to act upon the youthful mind, with at all the same advantage as in countries of long settled habits and uniformity of manners. Want of systematic employment is prone to injure the mind, and if, moreover, during its growing and forming state, it be continually subjected to the excitement occasioned by the sudden and frequent disruption of old associations, and the formation of new ones, the evil will be greatly aggravated. The disadvantages attendant upon such an unstable condition of the social system, operate in various ways, all tending to render most precious and influential, the instructions received around the fire-side, from the lips of wise, pious, and affectionate

mothers. Their solicitude receives no abatement from local changes, or rather they are only stimulated to fresh and unwonted exertion by the consciousness that from altered circumstances, the severance of other ties of friendship, and the cutting off of those channels of improvement hitherto resorted to by their children, the opportunities for benefitting the objects of their affections are greatly curtailed, so that a result inevitably highly injurious to their character must be experienced, unless maternal zeal is able to suggest a remedy. Those who have hearts to love the land of their birth, must be forcibly impressed by the consciousness that as each succeeding day is rolling over our wide-spread union, there is witnessed a great progression in the tide of immigration, and that each succeeding wave bears many and many a youthful heart, just in its critical and forming state, far from the sanctuaries of their fathers, and their literary privileges, to the solitary recesses of some western forest, or luxuriant prairie, or to some newly erected village, where the public ministrations of grace will be no longer accessible, and where instructions on the points most essential to be known and understood, if heard at all, will in all probability only be received from maternal wisdom. Several instances have been made known to me, and I presume many more might be readily discovered in our union, of female heads of families, who, by necessity, or the indifference of their male relatives to the subject of religious privileges, having been separated from the temple of God, and the wholesome instruction of his accredited representatives, have been so constrained by love to their Lord and Saviour, and by ardent desires for the spiritual improvement of their families, that without compromising feminine propriety in the least, they have officiated as the priestesses of their own families, by

assembling morning and evening their household bands around the domestic altar, and on the Sabbath of the Lord, have led their assembled ranks, and sometimes certain neighbors in addition, to the throne of grace, and have instructed and prepared their minds for the reception of the fulness of divine light and truth. Not unfrequently, one of these quiet circles, originally gathered round the feet of a pious and well instructed female, in a western wilderness, has been the nucleus of a church subsequently founded, perhaps in answer to the earnest petitions of that very individual, and the children taught diligently by her in infancy, in riper years by the blessing of God, have in some instances, become ambassadors for Christ, and in others, as laymen, pillars in his church.

Especial stress has been laid, in the previous remarks, on the moral agency of women, in the maternal relation, because experience and revelation both teach us, that the influences are most available for the improvement of the highest interests of our race, which are brought to bear on them during the earliest and most impressible period of their existence. But many of the peculiarities in the political and social condition of our country, which have been briefly adverted to, will be readily admitted by a reflecting mind, to be calculated to operate little less favorably on the female character in other relations of life. If the full occupation of time to which the fathers of our land are almost necessarily subjected, enhances the value of maternal exertion, no less does the heavy demand made upon the latter, serve, in numberless instances to mature with rapidity the character of the daughters and sisters of America.

The enervating effect of our sultry climate, combined with the weight of care generally laid upon the mothers

of families, exclusive of the comparatively small number, who are enabled to secure efficient assistance in their household arrangements, very generally devolves upon the daughters, especially of American families, unusual responsibilities, especially such as are the most advanced in years. The consciousness of having imposed on them a necessity for exertion, has a wonderful effect in maturing the minds of young females, and in fitting them for present duty, as well as in preparing them for more enlarged usefulness at future periods.

The necessary demands made in the United States upon the mother by her youthful charge in the nursery, very generally places the children of a more advanced age, very much under the guardianship of their elder sister or sisters, who are thus invested with privileges, and a power of influence, only inferior to that possessed by the maternal head of the family. That these peculiarities in our social condition incident to a young country, have not failed in ensuring great good, I can scarcely doubt, for, within my own sphere of observation, I have had the happiness of knowing a great number of interesting young females, who have been providentially trained to eminent usefulness, by what some might pronounce the mere necessity of circumstances. They have been the sympathising friends, judicious counsellors and affectionate instructresses of the younger members of their family, while to their parents respectively they have been made a solace and support, strengthening their authority by their filial reverence; lightening their cares by their exertions—and cheering them by their affectionate and pleasing assiduities.

If the moral discipline to which our sex has been subjected in this country, has eventuated in ultimate benefit to them, as mothers, sisters, and daughters, no less

serviceable has it been, I conceive, to them in the conjugal relation. The fluctuating state of our population, the alternations in commercial affairs, to which this country has been specially subjected, the sudden and unexpected reverses of fortune which have been witnessed in every section of the union, by the mania for land speculation, which has prevailed so alarmingly, have all combined to invest American wives with a degree of influence, which is probably no where surpassed. A wife's ministration in the hours of perplexity and adversity, have become a subject of common remark, and have furnished themes for some of our most popular authors, and with especial emphasis are they felt by the sons of the western republic, who, continually migrating from place to place, find in the season when judicious counsel and encouragement, and affectionate sympathy are most needed, their dwelling place surrounded by strangers, and themselves without one earthly eye to which they can turn for the manifestation of kindness, or one bosom to which they can confide unreservedly their sorrows and difficulties, and from whose judgment they can seek counsel and instruction for practical guidance, save those, who having been indissolubly linked to them by the most solemn vows, have with untiring and cheerful devotion, remained at their sides, through all the vicissitudes of time and place.

CHAPTER II.

THE CHARACTERISTIC TRAITS OF AMERICAN FEMALES.

On passing from one division of continental Europe to another, or on crossing the narrow channel which separates the kingdom of Great Britain from that of France, the attention of travellers is immediately arrested by the striking characteristic traits which mark the people of these several countries. The natural boundary may be imperceptible to the eye of a foreigner, as in passing from France to the Netherlands; and yet, notwithstanding, the contrast presented between the manners and habits of the two people will be most striking, and obvious to a very superficial observer.

This nationality of character is by no means so marked in the people of the United States, as in those of European countries, as it was colonized by citizens of various nations whose intermingled descendants have perpetuated and blended the constitutional peculiarities of their several forefathers. Among these a more general resemblance may, however, be traced to the English, in the state of society, and tone of sentiment and character, since from them the majority of Americans trace their descent. Independently of the sympathetic bond by which a common language connects the offspring of the mother land with those of her western daughters, American and English hearts when properly attuned, have many points of union, in thought

and opinion; among these may be specified the position assigned to, and the influence ascribed to women.

New England has been the nursing mother of the American states, and has sent forth her bands of virtuous and enterprising sons and daughters, to people the wide spread prairies of the west, and to rear villages and thriving towns, on spots, where scarce a quarter of a century since, the primeval forests were flourishing in undiminished beauty.

The pilgrim-band of English puritans who first touched the shores of America, and their immediate followers and descendants, were, it is well known, persons of most rigid and undeviating morality, and from principle as well as from the necessity of circumstances, frugal and simple in their habits. Domestic economy was rigidly cultivated, and their females were taught to regard their social and religious duties as of paramount importance.

Many of the wives of the leading New England colonists, were women of elevated moral character, calculated to adorn domestic life, and render it eminently attractive to others, and the influence exerted by them has been perpetuated in their descendants. Such was the admirable Mrs. Margaret Winthrop, the wife of the first governor of Massachusetts, whose correspondence with her husband, may be cited as a model of conjugal tenderness, admirably chastened by elevated religious sentiment. With beautiful *naietate* she declared among the many reasons for her ardent attachment to her husband, the two which preponderated, were, "first, that he loved God," and secondly, "that he loved her;" and she delighted to steal time from household duties to talk with her absent lord. A woman of this character, could scarcely fail in her eminent station, as the wife of the highest executive officer in the colony of Massachusetts, to find the feminine

graces which adorned her character, imitated by others of her sex, and thus to have given a hallowed tone to the sentiments and practice of the American females of the colonial times. Isaac Johnson, to whose memory great interest is attached by Americans, as having been very instrumental in sounding the metropolis of our eastern states, was no less happy than Governor Winthrop, in the wife of his affections. The name of this amiable woman—the Lady Arabella Johnson—was universally reverenced and beloved, and so deservedly dear was she to her husband, that when he was called to a final separation, his spirit, though sustained by christian hope, received so deep a wound, as to prevent his long surviving her; and after a few brief weeks, “in sweet peace,” he sank into the arms of him, to whom as “the resurrection and the life,” his soul trusted in confident assurance, for the restoration of his departed treasure.

These amiable and holy women, with a contemporary host of kindred spirits, having sunk to rest, were succeeded by generations of females, who emulated them in piety, intellectual acuteness, and domestic virtues. From such sprang many of our distinguished statesmen, and eminent divines: Edwards and Dwight were both nurtured on a mother’s knee, and received their initiation into moral and intellectual truth from the lips of maternal wisdom.

Of a kindred spirit were the mothers and wives of the forefathers of New England, who during the revolutionary struggle, exhibited uncommon patriotism, and self-denying resolution. When convinced that the good of their country required on their part an abstinence from the moderate use of luxuries, to which only they had been habituated, they cheerfully and magnanimously relinquished all such indulgences; and tradition has handed down innume-

rable records of the ready ingenuity and alacrity with which the women of New England, as well as those of other portions of the colonies, contrived to provide substitutes for many of those articles, which their more luxurious and self-indulgent daughters of the present day, consider as indispensably necessary.

The anecdote related by Franklin respecting his own wife, to prove the simplicity of her habits, as well as her conjugal affection, may serve as a pleasing illustration of the domestic excellencies, by which her countrywomen of that period were very generally characterized. Happy would it be, if some of the present generation of American wives would pause and enquire if they could plead in apology, such pretty and touching arguments before yielding to the temptation to indulge extravagance in the possession of the costly mirrors, luxurious carpets and draperies, or the sumptuous services of plate and china, whose presence in the modern drawing rooms of less distinguished men than Franklin, will often provoke a sigh, or the expression of gloomy forebodings from the lips of the patriotic citizens of the republic.

"It was lucky for me," observes Franklin, "that I had one as much disposed to industry and frugality as myself. She assisted me cheerfully in my business, folding and stitching pamphlets, and tending shop, purchasing old linen rags for making paper, &c. We kept no idle servants; our table was plain and simple, our furniture of the cheapest sort. For instance, my breakfast was for a long time bread and milk, (no tea,) and I ate it out of a two-penny porringer, with a pewter spoon; but mark how luxury will enter families, and the progress in spite of principle; being called one morning to breakfast, I found it in a china bowl with a spoon of silver. They had been

bought for me without my knowledge, by my wife, and had cost the enormous sum of three and twenty shillings, for which she had no other excuse or apology to make, than that she thought, *her husband deserved a silver spoon and a china bowl*; as well as any of her neighbors. This was the first appearance of plate or china in our house, which afterwards, in the course of years, as our wealth increased, augmented gradually to several hundred pounds in value."

Let it not, however, be supposed that the domestic and feminine graces, were manifested by the women of New England, alone, to the exclusion of their countrywomen of the other colonies. Those of the middle states, substantially harmonized with the former in their developments, and if the females of the southern states, presented in their character and deportment variations of moral coloring, they were in excellence in no wise inferior to their sister residents of the middle and eastern portions of the American colonies, and their peculiarities were strictly referable to the social organization of society incident to regions in which slavery prevails.

The females of Virginia and Carolina were, by these circumstances, exempted from taking the same active part in domestic economy, as was demanded from ladies of the non-slave-holding states, and were consequently at that period, as at the present, inferior to the latter in physical activity and domestic system, so far as the routine of external things is concerned. But when the graces of the heart, and intellectual worth are to be sought for, we find the women of the United States meeting on equal grounds. The names of Mrs. Washington, the excellent and admirable mother of the father of our country, and of Mrs. Ramsay, the daughter of the celebrated Henry Laurens, of South

Carolina, not to adduce others, are a sufficient evidence that feminine excellence of the highest order, was exhibited and fully appreciated in the southern sections of America, as elsewhere, throughout the first years of her national history, and at the present moment imagination recalls among the rank of beloved friends, many of the ladies of Virginia and Carolina, who are second to none out of the circle of female relatives in my esteem and affection. Since the period of our revolutionary struggle, the circumstances of American society have been greatly changed, whether *in all respects* to the decided furtherance of our morals, or the reverse, admits of a question. Luxury in its advancing inroads upon the habits and manners of our females, has certainly been injurious to them and to the community at large. The simplicity and moderation which characterized former days, no longer appear to gratify the eye of one, whose heart beats in steady response to those pulsations which indicate a healthful state of the body politic. The christian patriot, while he acknowledges readily and mournfully, that vice and dissipation have fearfully progressed in our country, during the last century, and that our females in many cases, present a melancholy contrast with their mothers of olden times, can yet exult with holy joy in the thought, that true religion has greatly advanced in the same period, and that among the women of the United States, many more in proportion to the population may be found at the present hour, than even in the eventful crisis of the formation of the republic, cordially and devotedly attached to the doctrines of Protestant christianity,—intelligently informed as to the nature of its requirements, and meekly and conscientiously in their conduct exemplifying its precepts, and alluring to its standard, by the silent eloquence of their example, as well as by

faithful instructions, in their various posts of legitimate exertion.

Among the votaries of fashion in our crowded cities, the tone of sentiment prevalent at the present day, is too often demoralizing in its tendency; but we are happy to know that such is not the state of thought or feeling among American women, taking them *en masse*. It would be manifestly unjust to seek for information by which to judge of our countrywomen at large, from the listless daughters of dissipation, who in America, as elsewhere, are generically characterized by a morbid craving for artificial excitement, an obtuse perception of the claims of social or religious duty, and an anxiety to escape from the pressure of its requirements.

But blessed be God! it is not on such inefficient and defective agents, that America is obliged to depend for the exertion of healthful female influence. The gay and fashionable who are floating on the surface of society, are not the true representatives of their sex in this republic. In the private haunts of domestic life, quietly pursuing the noiseless tenor of their way, the great Searcher of hearts, at this moment beholds with complacency, and has summoned to his aid, a host of females, baptized by the Spirit of God, and prepared for effective duty. At this moment, I say emphatically, because I believe firmly, the peculiarly trying circumstances to which our country has been subjected for the last few years, has served, by the grace of God, as a most wholesome discipline to a vast number of my countrywomen; purifying, ennobling, and exalting them in the scale of being. Many who had previously been floating quietly down the stream of life, almost unconscious of the capabilities of their nature, while called on merely to enjoy their varied blessings, have in the hours

of darkness consequent from those clouds which have obscured the national horizon, been forced to learn a new and more difficult, but far more valuable lesson,—how to endure reverses of fortune, and to descend from the slippery height of prosperity, into the vale of adversity. Like the beautiful flower which expands its silvery petals and sheds forth its delicious perfume, only when the shades of evening steal over the landscape, these daughters of America never unfolded the lovely lineaments of their moral nature, until the clouds of sorrow had passed over their domestic joys and obscured their former brightness.

Endowed as I believe my countrywomen to be, in no ordinary measure, with the distinctive features of woman's nature, I consider the circumstances in which they are ordinarily placed, especially adapted to develope their graces in perfection. The benign influences of a pure faith in the public mind at large have expanded their souls and enlightened their consciences in the perception of their legitimate duties, and even when acting from no higher motives than moral principle, they have been generally characterized by energy of thought, warmth of affection, and promptitude of purpose and action.

Perhaps such a visitation as that to which we have been of late subjected, could alone have revealed the true worth of American females. That it has done so, will be abundantly evident to those, who will but pause to recal the innumerable cases, in which under exigency of circumstances, the wives, mothers, sisters and daughters of our country, when stimulated by affection and the claims of duty, have become, by the blessing of God the pillars of their domestic fabrics, the means under a higher power of supporting and sustaining the whole in safety and permanence.

Female character has been, as I conceive, often developed with peculiar beauty by the American women of the west. Having relinquished, as the mass of them have done, at the call of duty, the luxuries and indulgences of their homes in the eastern states, they have with their little ones sought dwelling places frequently in the untrodden wilderness, and by a sudden transition have been compelled to substitute for the services of well-trained domestics, their physical energies alone. Oh! with what true dignity and excellence have the women of America under these circumstances been found to act, and how have they proved themselves blessed, and the source of blessing to others.

Stimulated by the restless activity of the female heart, which God has, for wise purposes, taught instinctively to exercise itself in the furtherance of the happiness of the objects of its affections, the spirit of the woman of the west has tasked its ingenuity to devise means, and its hand, that faithful and efficient auxiliary to feminine zeal—has tested its wonderful powers of diffusing peace and happiness around the home of the emigrant,—rendering it as far as practicable, meet to fill the vacuum created in the hearts of husband and children, by the loss of the first and most beloved dwelling place of early days.

The women of our country have sometimes elicited witty remarks from European travellers, from their scrupulously avoiding in general society the discussion of many topics, which by their sex in France as well as among other nations of Europe, are frequently spoken of unhesitatingly in presence of gentlemen. They have on this account been satirized as prudes, an appellation which in reality should be considered opprobrious, only when applied according to its original acceptation in our language. But

if my countrywomen have subjected themselves to ridicule, by manifesting a modest reserve of manner, a more rigid observance of the proprieties of the female character, and a studious reluctance at receiving the attentions of *les hommes galants* which are so freely tendered and accepted in some foreign lands, then I trust they may long be considered entitled to rank as *prudes*.

Although the nuptial contract among us is by no means so generally sealed in the sanctuary of God, as in Europe, yet are the duties of the conjugal and maternal relations, for the most part faithfully observed; and the wife who in the United States violates the marriage vow, whether she has moved in the higher or lower walks of life, inevitably subjects herself to severe censure from the community, and is almost universally obliged to forfeit her place in society, and is no longer considered entitled to mingle as an equal, with the virtuous of her sex.

The women of this country have not yet risen to the same intellectual eminence as has been reached by a large proportion of their sex in Great Britain, but I conceive the difference observable in literary attainments between the females of the old and new world, can by no candid observer be attributed to natural deficiency in the latter, or want of proper taste. The peculiar situation of American society in the agricultural and manufacturing districts of the east, and throughout the western non-slave-holding states, with the exception of the large cities, compels our females to practice frequently much self-denial in the indulgence of mental recreations, in order that the more imperative claims of domestic and religious duties may be first attended to. While necessity thus closes the avenue to literary eminence or intellectual research, no mind unbiassed by prejudice, should load them with obloquy on this account.

Where time and opportunities for mental cultivation have been enjoyed by American females, experience has abundantly shown that they are capable of improving these advantages in no ordinary degree, and the author within her limited circle of observation, has been personally acquainted with not a few, and informed by report of other ladies in our country, who, inspired by the laudable motive of preparing brothers or sons for collegiate institutions, have without compromising the feminine modesty which marks their countrywomen, carried on their literary pursuits so successfully, that they have been enabled to prepare the objects of their solicitude, to pass honorably the examinations required preparatory to admission in Colleges of the several states. Among those thus trained, I may perhaps be allowed to allude to one gentleman, who, as is well known by the public, and his private friends, was initiated into classical as well as general literature by the instructions of a pious and widowed mother, who educated herself, in order that she might become the efficient instructress of her son; so successful were her efforts in this respect, that he for whom she labored so sedulously, has distinguished himself for great literary attainments, as well as piety, and after filling honorably an important station in the chief theological seminary of his own church, has subsequently been elected unanimously to the office of highest ecclesiastical dignity, recognized by the influential portion of the Church of Christ to which he belongs.

Similar examples might be cited in the east and west, the north and south of our union, and the author feels great satisfaction in knowing, that in almost every case, where this literary eminence has been striven after and attained by our countrywomen, it has been; not from the selfish desire for personal distinction, but to subserve a higher object. It is gratifying to the American patriot, to

recall the fact, that the authoresses of his country, have, in a majority of cases, been remarkable for inculcating the purest morality, and in many instances the tendency of their writings has been decidedly religious; indicating that well balanced state of the intellectual and moral nature, which is so peculiarly desirable in our sex.

In no country, probably, do females exert more influence over their male relatives than in our own, and foreigners have frequently remarked the courtesy and respect with which our sex are uniformly treated when travelling, through the union, provided they conduct themselves with decorum. The illustrious Washington was himself a beautiful exemplar of the proper deportment due by the stronger sex to the weaker and more defenceless. To his own mother he uniformly deferred with filial reverence, and his excellent wife he treated with no less respect and confidence. Many of the wisest and most virtuous of his countrymen have imitated his example. Two American gentlemen, distinguished in the legal profession, remarked on different occasions, to a youthful member of the bar of my acquaintance, who was highly esteemed by them; "Never fail to seek the advice of your wife on all important occasions." "Never!" said one of them, "did I depart from the counsel of my wife without being forced to regret so doing; nor follow it without being compelled to see the wisdom of my conduct!"

But let it not be supposed, that I consider my country-women free from blemish, or incapable of improvement. I feel compelled to say, that with many sterling excellences, they manifest some lamentable weaknesses. One, that is obvious to impartial observers and which has elicited some severe remarks from foreigners, is the taste for per-

sonal and household decoration, so generally exhibited by our females.

The eyes of the sober-minded English, accustomed to the chaste taste of their nation, are especially struck with the gaudy attire of the sex, both in our public promenades and in places of religious worship, and frequently estimates have been formed of the fair forms thus groaning under the ill-selected, and ill-adjusted load of ornament, which would have mortified the subjects of such remarks, and which have not unfrequently been corrected by more close observation and personal acquaintance.

Were this the only unfortunate consequence resulting from this false taste, it would not be so severe an evil to our country; but it too often proves fatally injurious to the moral interests of the community. The full consideration of this point we refer however, to a future occasion.

There is a fault, of kindred origin with that just named, too justly chargeable on the women of the United States, and to which, because it assumes frequently a more plausible form, it may from that circumstance be more advisable to advert; I refer to that excessive anxiety manifested by them generally, to educate their children to equal advantage with their neighbors. That good mothers should be ready and willing to submit to toil and privation to secure a good education for their families, is proper and commendable, provided the object they have in view, is really justly entitled to be so considered. But that education can alone be pronounced fit and proper, which is calculated to train the individuals enjoying its privileges, to a faithful discharge of the several distinct duties of their respective stations.

I apprehend great and almost incalculable evil has been produced by this ambitious feeling, so prevalent

among the mothers of America. If we look around on every side, we behold innumerable examples of women, who are practising self-denial, and enduring privation, not in reality to train their children for the stations to which God has appointed them, but to educate them *above the place* which they will most probably be called on to fill; and who have thus, strictly speaking, been the enemies and not the true friends of the objects of their affection. What, but ill-disguised ambition is it, which has induced the maternal heart so often to select accomplishments in place of plain substantial acquirements, as the object of her children's attainment, when scarce any probability or even possibility exists, that the one will be needed by her offspring in after life, while the latter may and will always be most available, to the individuals themselves, and to all with whom they are or may be connected? Nor is it in the case of daughters alone, that this evil is to be deprecated. Each year as it rolls over our republic, beholds many, very many, of her young men crowding into the professional ranks, whose natural abilities and acquirements forbid the expectation of their ever reaching to more than a very subordinate post; who have been consigned to hopeless anxiety and poverty, if not driven to employ unlawful means of pecuniary aggrandizement, by the secret ambition of their mothers, who would not consent to their endeavoring to seek competence and happiness in the respectable occupations of the mechanic or agriculturist.

I would affectionately suggest to my countrywomen, whether they may not be in error on yet another point. Are not, many of them, disposed to yield too freely to the inclinations of their daughters in respect to company, and to permit them far too frequently, to alternate the plea-

sures of visiting and receiving visits, with the duties of the school room? A morbid desire for excitement foreign to the daily routine of duty, is by no means the only evil thus generated, though it is one greatly to be dreaded by wise parents; but in addition to this, desultory habits will be almost uniformly found to result likewise from this system of management. Ceremonious visiting, or frequent visiting of any kind is far from salutary to youthful females, whose characters are in a forming state. The tendency is hereby much strengthened, common to fallen nature, to allow the opinions and practice of others, to regulate the life, instead of depending upon higher motives for guidance. The conventional system of education, had most undoubtedly its evils, and those of a most alarming kind; but so also has the one to which I have just alluded. A judicious, pious mother, is perhaps the best human guide between these dangerous extremes; while sedulously avoiding Scylla, she will take sufficient precautions against striking on Charybdis!

CHAPTER III.

CONSIDERATIONS ESSENTIAL TO THE IMPROVEMENT OF FEMALE INFLUENCE.

ALTHOUGH efficient moral agency in the management of the youth of our country, can undoubtedly be best secured by the mothers of the republic, yet let not American females, who have not been called to fill that high station in the body politic, flatter themselves that they enjoy an immunity from responsibility, for the exercise of influence over the juvenile members of society, by whom they are surrounded!

Should there indeed, be a solitary female found in our country, who could conscientiously affirm, that she was unable by the grace of God assisting her, to win to more steadfast perseverance in the path of duty, or to allure from the ensnaring influence of pernicious principles, one young heart—to make duty seem more pleasant, or vice look less attractive to a single juvenile relative or acquaintance — then to that individual in her unique position, might be granted an exemptive privilege, but not otherwise!

Under an impression of the universal responsibility resting on my countrywomen, the hints thrown out in the subsequent chapters, will be directed primarily to mothers, but not to them exclusively. They will be presented for the consideration of those, sustaining other domestic relations; and likewise to a highly respectable and important class, the female teachers of America. Were each of our sex permitted by Providence, to behold

the mystic veil drawn aside which shrouds futurity from view, and to mark how our destinies were to be connected with those of the young, among "our kindred according to the flesh," and with the best interests of our country at large, we might indeed be made to tremble as we marked the minute ramifications, branching forth from the daily current of our thoughts, words, and actions, intermingling with, and often coloring those passing through the bosoms of others, with whom in the providential arrangements of life, we were to be brought in contact. This vision is indeed withheld from all beings but God. But should not reason and revelation, without miraculous interposition convince us so effectually, of the duties imposed on us, as to lead us earnestly to enquire, how we may best be fitted, to discharge our solemn obligations towards all, who may be brought within the sphere of our controlling influence?

In order to obtain an answer to such interrogatories, it will be well to direct our attention to various distinct points, passing from one to another in succession, according to the precedence established by the relative importance of each. As sound morality has been already asserted to be in a most especial manner necessary to American citizens, then should they to whom the guardianship of the children of our country is entrusted, feel a peculiar anxiety to implant in their youthful charge, pure principles, and to preserve their consciences enlightened.

Were those committed in trust to us, by nature fitted to develope to equal advantage, the moral, intellectual, and physical parts of their nature, our task would not be so arduous. But just in proportion to the precedence which the former maintains, among the attributes of man's con-

stitution, and the demands for its faithful improvement, is the difficulty of training it.

The physical energies of children, will, when no organic weakness is inherent, generally expand, provided proper regulations be made for diet and exercise. The intellectual powers will ordinarily unfold under favorable culture, into healthful and harmonious action. But the spiritual nature will be uniformly found sending forth opposing influences, to thwart and even counteract our best efforts.

The bodies of our children are to be nurtured with all possible care; but the objects of our solicitude can appreciate our intentions, and gratefully acknowledge our fostering kindness. Their intellects are to be enlightened and their several faculties trained by laborious effort. If the task, however, be undertaken early, and be judiciously prosecuted, our youthful charge will imbibe a love for study, and learn to conform to our wishes, so that in time, their ardor for literary improvement may exceed what we may think judicious to indulge, and may require to be tenderly checked. But alas! when we attempt to train them to moral excellence, we are painfully compelled to acknowledge the disadvantages under which we labor. Before we can hope for full success, the frame-work of the spiritual nature must be taken down, and be constructed afresh. Original tastes and principles must be ejected, and new feelings and motives of action must be infused. In short, our children by nature "dead in trespasses and sins," must be regenerated by an equally free and sovereign exercise of creative power, with that which first wakened them into natural existence. For these reasons the remarks thrown out in the following pages, in respect to the best method of promoting the faithful exercise of

female moral agency over the youth of America will be directed.

- I. To the culture of their moral nature.
- II. To the improvement of their intellectual powers.
- III. To the forming of their physical habits and constitution.

Before entering into detail upon the consideration of the different branches of our subject, it would be well to direct our attention to some preparatory subjects of reflection, which are essential to be viewed aright, before we can hope to become efficient moral agents, according to the intentions of him, from whom alone, if we are accredited in our office, our instructions must be drawn. We should endeavor to inform ourselves accurately as to the nature of the work committed to us; the duties incumbent on us in respect to it, both active and passive; the end which is designed to be secured; the time allotted for the prosecution of our work; and the encouragements we have to sustain us under our trials and duties.

1. Scarcely any subject of enquiry could be proposed more calculated to elicit contradictory replies from the religious and worldly-minded classes of the community, than that now under consideration; since, according to the extent in which the leading doctrines of revelation are received, believed, and acted upon, will be the appreciation and proper guaging of that task assigned to the underworkers of God's providential government. By such as consider the scriptural statements of the corruption of human nature, and its total alienation from its Maker, as hyperbolical or figurative, it will as a matter of course, be thought comparatively a light work, to train to duty the young committed to their care; while by those who are accustomed to view the objects of their solicitude as the

inheritors of a depraved nature, "inclined to evil and that continually," it will be regarded most difficult and arduous. It is highly important, preparatory to our entrance upon official duty, that we form a correct estimate of the subject on which we have to act, and this we can only do, by the attentive study of that document, which contains the most true and accurate information on the points required. The Bible, when appealed to, informs us, that the soul of every human being, when first introduced into this world, is in a condition, so diseased, as entirely to incapacitate it by its own exertions, from ever attaining to holiness. This bias to evil, is also described, as being so strong, as to render any external restraint laid upon it wholly inadequate to its removal; so that while a judicious education may so far impose a bridle upon the corrupt inclinations, as to prevent a gross and open manifestation of them, it can by no means hope to extirpate the inward propensities. Scripture accordingly teaches us, that these old things must be made to pass away, and that all must be made new.

2. Under these circumstances it becomes manifestly important to us that we understand the nature of our prescribed work, and the duties incumbent on us under the providential economy of God, with respect to the moral government of his creatures. It would be an evident contradiction, for the Almighty by his prophets and apostles to exhort us to the discharge of duty, if there were not something incumbent on our part.

He manifests a wise and prudential economy in all his arrangements, and is represented as surveying the complicated operations of this lower world as its Governor; in order to ascertain whether each part of the vast machine, accomplishes its destined office. "Occupy till I come,"

is the solemn exhortation delivered to each of His creatures, when the allotment of talents is made to them severally. If women then are to be made instrumental in furthering the moral designs of God, they are ordinarily to do it by the use of means: and without the employment of these, we have no right to *expect* the blessing promised, since it is decidedly conditional. The child is to be trained in order that he may learn to depart from evil. The *fallow ground* is to be *ploughed*, preparatory to its yielding the desired crop. The duties incumbent upon females in the discharge of their moral agency, may I conceive be properly subdivided, into active and passive; both are equally essential, and neither may be omitted without manifest danger of failure. They are free and voluntary agents, and they may accordingly by their own volitions, according to the reasonable natures, which God hath given them, in conformity to the established principles of human action, avail themselves of means appropriate to the object they have in view, or they may withhold themselves from employing them: in the latter case they have no warrant to expect success. But while they conscientiously perform every *active* part of their duty; by consecrating their children in prayer, and by continuance in prayer for, and with them; by instruction, example, reproof, correction, and all other appointed and visible means, they are no less scrupulously required to discharge what may be styled the passive part of their work. With the same strenuousness with which they are to strive to fulfil duty, are they required not to depend on the intrinsic worth or goodness of any efforts made by them, or any steps they have, or may take, as if they had purchased a right to the blessing desired, or could lay the Almighty under an obligation to grant it, or any other boon, as of reward for meritorious actions per-

formed by them. Such presumption would be arrogant in the extreme, and would eventually, defeat the object desired.

On the contrary, christian females, while believing, that a connection is to exist between their efforts and the blessings sought by them, will not pretend to think, that the latter is the natural and legitimate result of their exertions, but one secured by the free and sovereign mercy and goodness of God. They will, therefore, diligently plough, and sow the seed, but they will depend on God alone to make it germinate. They will look to him for the former and the latter rain, for sunshine and harvest.

3. We will be stimulated to diligence, by ever keeping before us the end which we have in view, which should be nothing less, than the salvation of the souls of our children. This must be the golden mark set before us, and towards no other goal should the christian guardians of youth ever venture to direct their steps.

4. Nothing can more effectually incite us to exertion, than the thought of the shortness of the time allowed us. Life we know is the only period in which man is to secure eternal blessedness; so should we realize vividly, that infancy and early childhood are the especial seasons allowed to women to labor in our allotted task. Every waking hour of that fleeting and precious period is important, and we are to be watching the passage of each, for times and opportunities to prosecute our work.

5. It would be well did we more continually ponder on the sweet words of encouragement, inscribed in the sacred volume, that we through "patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope," under seasons of darkness and discouragement. God speaks to us in his word, to assure our trembling hearts, lest our feet should stumble

in the rough and thorny path which his children are so often appointed to tread, in their ascent to the hill of Zion. Since there is a providential arrangement of events great and small by which the system of God's moral government is carried on, then should each of us unhesitatingly and meekly bow to his decrees as made known to us severally, in the circumstances of our lot on earth; and in the occurrences of each passing day we should hear "a still small voice," whispering to us, the assurance that all is ordered by our Father and our God. Instead then of opposing fruitlessly the current, which sometimes seems to be setting against us continually for discouragement, let us rather remember that it is when the surface of the waters is agitated by tempestuous winds and storms, that the Saviour of the world may be seen most generally now, as of old, walking nearest to his children, and whispering to them, "It is I, be not afraid." It is exceedingly important that we who are commissioned to train little children, "in the house, and by the way," should ourselves learn practically to realize, that the things which are seen are temporal, "and soon to pass away; and the things which are not seen are eternal." The belief should be inwrought into the daily current of our thoughts and feelings, so that our children may see that it is so, and that the reason why we faint not, under burdens, is because we are habitually looking to the blessedness of another period of existence. Bearing these views in our hearts, I conceive we should be better enabled to enter to advantage upon the discharge of those duties noticed in the subsequent chapters.

CHAPTER IV.

HINTS ON THE MORAL NURTURE OF YOUTH.

DURING the course of the day, on which these lines are penned, many females of our country, will, in each of its successive hours, be introduced to the first exercise of the maternal office, while a still larger portion may have other claimants superadded to those, hitherto possessing a title to a mother's cares and affections. But how few, how very few, it is to be feared, will realize as they ought, the solemn responsibilities hereby imposed on them, or the momentous interests involved in the destiny of each of the infant beings placed in their arms, in utter physical helplessness.

The accession of a new member to the already crowded ranks of the vast human family, is such a common event, and the consequences dependent on it, are so little understood, or reflected on by the mass of mankind, that the occurrence, under ordinary circumstances is scarcely noted, except among a surrounding circle of relatives and friends; and to many minds intelligence of this nature scarcely awakens any emotion, except it be, that of commiseration for her, who is supposed in the infant visitor, to find only an unwelcome addition to her cares and anxieties.

But to minds accustomed to reflection upon serious subjects, and especially to a mother, who realises the true condition of man, and the immensely important conse-

quences pendent upon the use made by each human being, of its period of probation, the birth of an infant will be considered as a matter of profound interest. She, to whom it is committed in guardianship, should, and will, if a christian, gaze on the countenance of her passive babe, with the deepest emotion. New relations will open upon her view, and considerations of momentous import, will be presented to her mind. She will know, and with trembling, acknowledge the fact, that the infant form now placed in her bosom, to receive its nurture, physical and moral, already occupies a place in the great system of God's providential government, and that if its life be prolonged, it must have high and holy duties to perform, or will contract deep guilt by their omission.

How strange the insensibility that prevails among the mass of mankind, in respect to the destinies of our race! The birth of an infant heir to the throne of Britain could indeed excite emotion in both hemispheres, and the wise and the noble employ themselves in speculations upon his probable destiny. But in sober truth, did we contemplate the subject with eyes enlightened to perceive its realities and with minds unbiassed by the prejudices growing out of the relations of this transitory state of being, we should feel vividly, that each American mother who this day receives an infant to her embrace, whatever may be her position in the scale of society, as a moral guardian, will be placed on the same footing with the youthful sovereign of the British empire. I mean not by any means to speak lightly of honorable titles, conferred by Providence, or of institutions recognised by Heaven. God forbid! "The powers that be, are ordained of God." I wish simply to call attention to the immense moral interests, both to the individual itself, and society at large, involved in the birth

of every child, in whatever station it may be placed. In one sense, there are grades, according to which, the relative importance of human beings may be estimated, and which I conceive, should be strictly maintained, since the Almighty established and still permits them to exist for the securing, no doubt, of wise and far-reaching designs of his providential government. But viewed under another aspect, human beings meet on a common level. "There is neither Greek, nor barbarian, bond, nor free," in the Church of Christ;—all are accounted as one in their Redeemer. When we reach the eternal world for which we are to educate our children, all these petty distinctions will have passed away, with other sublunary things; and although the christian is taught to believe, that there will be a visible gradation in the degrees of blessedness to be enjoyed by the righteous hereafter, it will not have had its origin in the distinctions, which existed in the ranks of human society. While we are told, that "one star is to differ from another star in glory," the occasion of this diversity has been carefully specified: "They that be wise," (that is in seeking eternal blessedness) "shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." Our divine Redeemer, while he explicitly asserts, that he, and he alone, could ever secure the salvation of any soul, no less expressly states the rule, according to which, the measure of blessedness to each individual is to be apportioned, "Behold I come quickly! and my reward is with me, *to give every man according as his work shall be.*"

In a previous chapter I adverted to the circumstances under which woman is placed, as being favorable, when rightly considered, to the discharge of her allotted duties; since in hallowed seclusion, the chosen saints and servants

of God, were uniformly disciplined for the arduous undertakings to which they were severally appointed. How precious then, may be rendered, the retirement of the birth-chamber, to women of piety, sensibility and intelligence! The more than ordinary quiet then enjoined, for the furtherance of the physical interests of the mother and infant, may be improved to both, for great practical good. If consecrated by the prayers and pious meditations of the former, it can scarcely fail to be instrumental by the blessing of God, in preparing her for her new and responsible duties, if they be then first assumed, or of brightening up the armor in which she has been already prosecuting her work, if she has been previously a mother.

The christian, who searches the Scriptures diligently, in order to gather from its sacred pages, the heavenly manna, provided by God, for the sustenance of the spiritual natures of his children, can scarcely fail to observe the beautiful consistency preserved between its precepts, promises, petitions, and the experience of the believers, whose history forms a part, and a most interesting part, of the inspired narrative. Never will she find a command given in one portion as obligatory on the believer, that may not in another, be observed, as forming the basis of a special and precious promise, calculated to meet the necessities of those on whom the precept has been enjoined; that in a third, may not be noted as forming the subject of fervent petitions addressed to the throne of grace by those desirous of obeying the requirements of specified duty; and that in a fourth, may not be found to constitute the theme of praise, from some individuals, and perhaps the identical ones, whose supplications have been recorded, on experiencing the fulfilment of the guarantee so graciously made by the covenant-keeping God.

An intelligent and believing mother in the fulness of her heart, will observe with deep emotion, this fourfold cord, twined together, on which she may strengthen her faith, as her anxious heart endeavors to prepare for duty; and she will plead the promises made to secure to her strength for its discharge.

It may be enquired, what is the first obligation, resting on one thus situated. Undoubtedly, it is by prayer and in faith, to bring her babe in its helplessness and destitution, immediately to the Redeemer, that he may lay his hand on it and bless it, as did the mothers of old who thronged his pathway while on earth. The corner-stone on which she is to build all her hopes and exertions, must be the elect and precious one, provided by God, and unless her first steps lead her to his feet, every subsequent part of her progress, will be replete with difficulties, and harassed by discouragement. She will not, however, rest satisfied with a committal of her infant to God, made in the privacy of her chamber alone; she will delight to bring it to the sanctuary, and there publicly, by the voice of one of God's ministering servants, and sustained by the prayers of his believing people, to devote to his holy and blessed service, as Hannah did, "the asked of God," with a heart glowing with love and strong faith. As praye was the initiative act of the mother, in her entrance on her work, and even her exercise in anticipation of the actual assumption of her duties, so will it and must it, continually sustain her in their exercise, or she can never hope to prosper. Prayer must be the Alpha and Omega, in the discharge of her maternal duties. Without it no exertions can be depended on, no success ought to be anticipated; because the promises of God are pledged conditionally with this proviso, "ask and you shall receive," "seek and

you shall find." When prayer is diligently and faithfully employed, in conjunction with her best efforts, even though appearances may for a time be discouraging, and the prospect apparently dark, a mother ought not to allow herself to sink in hopeless despondency. The experience of the Christian Church, strongly corroborates the assertion, made for the encouragement of the pious Monica, the mother of the celebrated St. Austin, when her heart in its anxiety and anguish under the evil courses of her beloved child, sought counsel at the mouth of one of "the sons of consolation," "the child of so many prayers can hardly be lost," said the man of God. So does the experience of believers in succeeding ages, continue to say to christian mothers, who are conscientiously fulfilling their duty, even under discouragement and perplexity. It is good for such "to hope and quietly wait for the salvation of God." A striking case in attestation of the efficacy of a pious mother's prayers, was not long since related to me by a clerical friend, who was personally acquainted with the parties concerned. A Christian mother of New England had a son to whom she was ardently attached, and for whose spiritual welfare, her soul was deeply engaged. Restless and volatile in his temperament, the youth although highly gifted in mind, seemed for a long and weary season, to give no hopes of the fulfilment of his fond mother's most anxious desires. Manhood was succeeding to youth, and the child of her affections, removed from her immediate influence had nearly completed his collegiate course, and a continuance of the same levity and wildness which had marked his earliest years, seemed to promise, that the close would witness nothing more auspicious. The prayers of her who gave him birth, had however, incessantly followed him, and as in infancy, she

had had her slumbers broken by the wailing of her babe, and her hours of darkness had often been passed in attendance upon him, during the seasons of disorder incident to the physical nature of childhood; so now, in the eventful period of his collegiate life, did the tender mother, voluntarily, and frequently, devote the lonely and silent watches of the night to earnest and most affectionate prayer for the renewal of his corrupt nature. This excellent woman had imitated the example of the Syro-Phenician mother, who petitioned the Redeemer so long with apparent fruitlessness for the restoration of her daughter; long did he delay to answer each; but most gracious and abundant was the reward finally granted to both. During the last year of his residence at college, this son of so many prayers, in common with a number of his companions, became the subject of strong religious impressions, which, by the grace of Christ, eventuated in his entire conversion, and on his graduating, he returned to the maternal roof, an humble and sincere believer, and soon devoted himself to his Master's service, in the missionary work, and not long since, sealed his labors by death.

While the mother, commences and carries on her exertions in this spirit, and as the sagacious Barrow observes, continually watches to introduce amidst all her most occupied moments, "a wedge of prayer," she will not rest satisfied with this effort alone. With true wisdom, she will endeavor to draw all the principles, according to which she seeks to frame the moral nature of her children, in strict dependence on the divine blessing, from the sacred volumes whose contents were "written for admonition," in maternal as well as other duties. She will never venture to depend upon any principle as a motive of action,

unless it be found in the Bible. She will make it "the man of her counsel," the standard by which she will endeavor to teach her children, to judge of all duties, and to decide on actions, characters, and opinions. Here the christian mothers of America should feel their blessed privilege, for while the varying circumstances of human society are such, even in our own highly favored country, as to preclude many by unavoidable impediments, from efficiently educating their children themselves, or from having them thoroughly instructed in human knowledge, she who has the Bible in her hand, and its blessed truths impressed on her heart, may still be enabled to be to her little flock, "a prophet to teach them the will of God; a priest to lead them to the mercy seat, and pray with, and for them; a ruler to keep them in subjection and to govern according to the will of God." She will remember the circumstances of their case, and thankfully availing herself of the concessions made in revelation to their infirmities, neither attempt or expect to make christian men and women of them, while in age they are but babes. During these tender years, she will rather endeavor to lead them to speak as children, and to think as such, and instead of looking for developments of religious experience, conformed in all respects to those presented by adult christians, she will rather desire it to be otherwise, since such an exhibition she would consider manifestly unnatural while the elements of character are in their incipient state.

Experience has furnished pious parents with many painful lessons, to prove the great danger of subjecting the spiritual or intellectual nature of the young, to the *forcing process*, since the growth thus unnaturally produced, however fair it may seem for a while to superficial obser-

vers, has proved, and will almost uniformly prove, to be deceptive and unsound; withering, either under the scorching rays of the sun of prosperity, or the blighting effects of temptation. "The religion of a child," observes an interesting, judicious, and very pious writer, "will appear rather in influential feelings, and in behavior, than in knowledge; for a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right." Obedience and truth, self-denial, meekness, and love springing *as a whole*, from fear of God and *general trust in Christ*, are the religion of a child, and may be found accompanied by a very slender and undefined knowledge of doctrines. Yet these graces when real, are no less opposed to the natural dispositions of childhood, than they are to those of manhood. And if they distinctly and habitually appear, united in any one, along with a spontaneous devotedness, and a spirituality of taste and thought beyond what habits of education will produce; there is reason to hope, that a higher power than human motive, or natural principle is at work in that soul, and that whether child or adult, he is a new creature born again of the Holy Spirit."*

But although the mother in the discharge of her duties to the young immortals committed to her care, be permitted and even required to consider the infirmities incident to their tender age, she will not presume to be remiss in the inculcation of the fundamental truths of religion. Protracted religious exhortations, or sound truth presented in a dry and didactic manner, will I conceive, seldom take

* Notices of the lives and death beds of Abner and David Brown, two infant brothers, who were laid in the same grave on the 18th of January, 1834: with suggestions on their christian nurture of children; by their father the Rev. Abner Brown, of Pytchley, Northamptonshire, England.

hold on the consciences or hearts of children, which sufficiently explains the fact, of so many of our rigid puritanical forefathers, having been succeeded by irreligious and heterodox offspring. "I well remember," observes the excellent Leigh Richmond, in the interesting tribute penned by him, to the memory of his beloved and admirable mother, "in the early dawn of my expanding reason, with what care she labored to instil into my mind a sense of the being of God, and of the reverence which is due to Him; of the character of a Saviour, and of his infinite merits; of the duty of prayer, and the manner in which it ought to be offered up at the throne of grace. Her way of enforcing these subjects was like one, who felt their importance, and wished her child to do so likewise. First instructed by her to read, I have never forgotten, in my Bible lessons, with what simplicity and propriety, she used to explain and comment on the Word of God, its precepts and examples. These infantine catechetical exercises, still vibrate in my recollection, and confirm to my own mind, the great advantage attendant upon the earliest possible endeavors, to win the attention and store the memory with religious knowledge. Her natural abilities which were of a very superior order, enabled her to converse with a very little child to much effect, and there was a tenderness of affection, united to a firmness of manner, which greatly promoted the best interests of a nursery education."

An eminently great and good man of our own country, the late venerable Dr. Dwight, of Connecticut, is said never to have been more eloquent or interesting in conversation, than on those occasions, in which he was led to revert to his tender, faithful, and exemplary mother, who possessed uncommon powers of mind and a most elevated

tone of piety. As her husband was much engrossed in business, like the mass of his countrymen, the education of their children, chiefly devolved upon the mother, who not only successfully initiated this her eldest son as well as his brothers and sisters into human learning, but early and very happily directed his attention to the great truths of religion. From the dawn of moral consciousness she strove assiduously to impress upon him the fear of God, and the necessity of keeping his commandments. She was strenuous in her endeavors to render the precepts of the Bible intelligible, and to inculcate a strict love of veracity, which she justly considered a most important feature of the moral character. Until young Dwight completed his sixth year, he was almost exclusively confined to his mother's tutelage, and found his school-room within the enclosure of the nursery. A considerable portion of each day, was devoted to reading the Scriptures with his maternal instructress, who possessed like the parent of Richmond, a happy facility in rendering conversation upon the contents of the sacred volume, interesting to children.

The excellent Doddridge, a name dear to pious minds in all countries, received his earliest religious instructions, as he sat on his widowed mother's knee, or at her side, on his little chair. The china tiles which supplied in her mantel, the place of marble, had been ornamented with illustrations of Scripture history. With the quickness of feminine perception, she marked the attention of her child, when riveted on these pictures; she perceived a lodgment prepared for the reception of divine truth; she improved her opportunities; and making the embellished tiles, her text-book, she daily drew from them sweet lessons of piety and wisdom, which, by God's grace,

became engraven on "the fleshly tablets of his heart," for the blessing of millions of unborn creatures. Most happy will it be for every mother, who, like the ladies we have alluded to, and a multitude more that might be named, shall establish a hallowed train of association, with the infantine recollections of the fire-side.

Among the numberless directions for guidance, presented to the moral guardians of infancy, there are many which pointedly indicate the immense importance of an early familiarity with the words, as well as with the principles of Scripture. "Thy Word," exclaims the Psalmist, "have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee;" and in reply to his own interrogatory as to the means whereby the young might be enabled to cleanse their way, he gave that salutary counsel, "by taking heed thereto, according to thy Word," and again, "the entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding *to the simple.*" St. Paul as if desirous to impress upon mothers especially, their duty in this respect, and as if to show the connection which such a habit was permitted to have with the fact of the early conversion of his beloved disciple, subsequently created the first bishop of Ephesus, informs his readers, that from a child, he had known the Holy Scriptures, which had "been able to make him wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus;" having been instructed therein, by his pious mother and grandmother. In pursuance of this Scriptural advice, woman when acting as the moral agent of God, will do well, in studiously exerting herself, to *hide the Word of God*, in the hearts of her children, while their memories are as yet, fresh and vigorous, and comparatively unexercised. She will not refrain from doing so, because the truths thus committed may not always be comprehensible, to their tender

intellects. She will be actuated by faith, hoping and trusting that the time will come when God's spirit may shine in their hearts, irradiating with divine light the texts engraven early on their memories, so that the glory of Christ may be reflected on them, for the illumination of the soul.

From the time when each of her babes has sent forth its first tiny "feelers of love" and intellect, the mother should realize that her work is gradually opening upon her and by the most judicious and unremitting efforts, she should seek in entire dependence upon the aid so graciously promised to prosecute her allotted work, never forgetting the fact that "self is the great hydra" of fallen nature that must be brought into subjection to God. In the subsequent seasons of brightest promise, or most marked exhibition of loveliness, it may be difficult fully to admit this painful truth; or while yet a meek infant it lies smiling in her arms in passive beauty, by

"Grief undarkened, nor by care disturbed."

As the mind expands, she will seek to pre-occupy it by an early familiarity with the fundamental truths of revelation. Men of the world may smile at the idea, and some truly pious persons who have not been conversant with children at this tender age, have pronounced such a course highly injudicious, but experience in innumerable instances has proved that it is notwithstanding, a perfectly practicable work. "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not," was the command of our gracious Saviour, who knew perfectly the capabilities of the infant mind to embrace heartily such truths of his blessed gospel as are essential to salvation. "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast thou perfected praise;" was the declara-

tion of the Psalmist; and our Lord when subsequently referring to this passage, sent forth an expression of thanksgiving, for the fact that while the truths of revelation were hidden retributively from those who, in their own esteem, and that of the world, were wise and prudent, they had been "revealed unto babes." An intelligent and pious mother should not, however, attempt to perplex her youthful charge by trying to explain things which God designed, probably for the exercise of faith, should continue to be full of mystery, even to mature intellects. Thus though she will assiduously seek to impress on their minds a belief of the Trinity in Unity, she will not attempt to disguise from them that the mode by which this united and yet perfectly distinct existence of the three blessed persons of the Godhead is maintained, is incomprehensible to herself as well as to them; because this knowledge was not thought by the Almighty necessary for us in the present life. The facts of man's fall, the necessity of a renewal of his nature by the Holy Spirit, the birth, righteousness, atonement, resurrection and intercession of the Redeemer, can be rendered intelligible to a child in very early life, provided these truths be presented in a judicious, affectionate manner, free from formality, and unincumbered by those adjuncts of man's devising, which he has thrown around them in his fruitless efforts to render comprehensible what the divine mind had taken the precaution to make sufficiently simple to be level to the understanding of "the wayfaring man," so that even if his understanding be of the most moderate order, he need "not err therein."

The philosophic Athenians derided the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, and many erudite men of subsequent ages have scoffed at the same fundamental truth of revelation, because in all such cases the natural pride of

the human heart could not brook to receive as an article of creed what was not accommodated to the previous conceptions of the mind. But let the youthful heart, either in the anticipation of its own death or that of some beloved friend, or when mourning over the loss of those already departed, have the simple fact of the resurrection brought tenderly and judiciously before it, and it will eagerly seize upon it, and believe it gladly. I have myself known a sweet child of three years old whose little heart was deeply excited by the idea of the impending death of a beloved friend during a season of illness, when the probability of such an event was suggested to him. But when the idea of the resurrection was presented to his mind, he eagerly grasped at it, and believing in it, his little bosom ceased to heave, and the tears no longer suffused his cheeks. "Oh," he exclaimed, "how happy I will be when dear Jesus calls me from my grave. I will fly away to meet you, and may be you and my dear little C — (a lovely infant brother who died before his birth,) will come first to meet me with your golden harps." On another occasion it was affecting to witness the same dear child endeavoring to find similar support for his mind when under deep excitement of feeling, at the sudden death of a favorite cat. "Oh tell me if she will rise again?" was his earnest enquiry after the first burst of grief had somewhat subsided. His sweet countenance bathed as it was in tears, expressed so fully the solicitude with which his tender heart awaited an answer, that it was truly distressing to be obliged to answer him in the negative. Repeatedly through the following day he would leave his play and come to make a similar enquiry; his heart yearned to know that he and his favorite might hereafter renew their former sweet companionship.

I conceive it to be highly important likewise, that a mother should frequently bring before the minds of her children in early life, those first truths of moral science which christian philosophers are accustomed to regard as a constituent part of our nature, and as the common heritage of all sound minds. Let the female guardians of youth be in the habit of judiciously appealing to such principles as these in their intercourse with the objects of their affections; conviction of the existence and continual presence of a holy and omniscient God, to whose nature sin of all kinds is abhorrent, and who is the author, upholder, and governor of all things; an assurance of the never ending state of human existence, and of the intimate connection of the present with the future life; an impression of responsibility to God as the moral governor of the universe; of a future judgment; of the relative obligations resting on man to his fellow creatures; a perception of the nature and quality of action and a recognition of the voice of conscience, when showing intuitively to the soul, with the voice of God, what is right and what is wrong. If these first truths of moral science be early appealed to by the mother, and the principles of rectitude which she seeks to establish in the minds of her children, be made to harmonize with them, she will, I believe, have gained a great point, and they will become fastened on the soul so surely that subsequent efforts will scarcely ever succeed in enabling her offspring to throw them off entirely. The happy consequence that will ensue when this vigilant exertion is brought to sustain maternal piety and affection, is happily illustrated by the Rev. Mr. Cecil. He became in early manhood a *professed infidel*, but he observes, "I liked to be an infidel in company rather than when alone. I was wretched when by myself. The principles, maxims,

and data of my mother spoiled my jollity; they were thrown continually in my way." Finally the heart perpetually harrassed by convictions inwrought by maternal influence, became effectually won to the love and service of God, and he who once in words denied his Lord, became subsequently his faithful and accredited ambassador, abundantly honored by the seals that he was permitted to behold to his ministry. These efforts pre-suppose no extraordinary intellectual powers in the mother, nor any great attainments in human science, but are perfectly practicable for those of moderate understanding and scanty acquirements. Another important thing to be attended to in the moral nurture of our children is steadily to watch the unfoldings of individual character, of which there will often be a great diversity presented in each family circle. If woman's mind has been endowed with more quickness of perception than has been bestowed on the other sex, it was undoubtedly to fit her more effectually for her specific duties. It was desirable that the guardians of the youthful and corrupt children of men should be able to detect their special evil propensities in their incipient state, and firmly to trace out and place before their minds, what would be their effect on the character if permitted to be fully developed. I have not unfrequently been struck with a great difference in this respect in the views and judgment of fathers and mothers of equal piety and intelligence. The former would scarcely think it necessary more than to check slightly, an exhibition in the nursery which awakened deep anxiety in the latter. The father seemed to consider it as a proof of manly spirit natural and common to boyhood,—while the quick eye of maternal love deemed it an indication of a feeling which if suffered to remain unchecked, might grow into the spirit of a Na-

poleon, or a Danton. I was present on one occasion when two highly esteemed friends were conversing on the developments of character of one of their little daughters; who possessing exceeding loveliness of natural disposition, was disposed to love all who treated her with affection, and was ever ready to elicit tenderness from them in return. The mother had checked some exhibition of the kind, for she was afraid that the loving little creature might, if her natural disposition received no check, grow into womanhood desirous of seeking the admiration and attention of gentlemen, and thus lose the feminine modesty which she justly considered so precious a feature in the character of our sex. "It makes her lovely and attractive now," said she, "while she is young and artless, but I tremble at the thought of what it *may grow to some years hence.*" The father smiled; he thought his child quite safe from dangers of this kind, and pronounced his wife's fears groundless. I said nothing, although I inwardly commended the lady for her wise forethought, and ready perception of the evil which might grow out of an exhibition of feeling, which, in childhood, might have been encouraged as attractive by many less watchful eyes.

A judiciously pious woman in the education of her sons and daughters, will find herself obliged to vary her aim, as well as her plans, for she will rightly desire not to counteract, but to subserve the special designs of her Creator in the formation of the two sexes. A pious and very discriminating female writer remarks in a late work, "With reference to the religious education of women in this country; it is a home religion that we want; it is an influential, not a talking one; it is a quiet, not a bustling one. Argument, criticism, controversy, gifts of prayer, fluency of speech, zeal in the shock of parties, are public

demonstrations of religion, required of some, but not required of us. A female's piety should be no wandering star, shooting hither and thither, to be visible far off. *It should be fixed as a lamp, fixed in its own place, shedding to a certain distance, its steady equal lights, but brightest always to those that are nearest.*"*

Not only will sons and daughters require a different method of training, but a mother will very frequently perceive a necessity created for special variations in her system of education, by the diversities of moral character presented by those of the same sex. Some may by their exuberant vivacity and greater disposition to indiscretion, require to have their luxuriant growth often pruned and restrained by a gentle and judicious exercise of authority; while others by nature inclined to timidity, and predisposed to sink to the earth in despondency, will need on the contrary to be sustained by affectionate and encouraging words and attentions. It would be a manifest omission in attempting to suggest hints for training the moral nature, if there should be no special attention directed to the culture of the affections, since the happiness not only of individuals but of mankind at large, is susceptible of great increase from the due regulation of this part of our moral nature. The individual who habitually yields to the indulgence of unholy tempers, who cherishes anger, jealousy, and envy, becomes his own worst enemy, and the curse of all with whom he may be connected; while the meek, placid, and loving bear the elements of such peace and happiness as is not dependent on external circumstances, continually within their own bosoms, and diffuse enjoyment to all who may be treading the pathway of life

*A word to Women and other gatherings by Caroline Pry.

with them. What a different aspect would the moral world present if in faithful dependence on the divine blessing, we endeavored habitually to regulate our own affections, and sought to train our children in that "excellent way" of love so beautifully enforced by the Apostle in his epistle to the Corinthians! "God is love," says the scripture, and the description given of the state of mind of the righteous, hereafter, is that they shall be "like him," for they "shall see him as he is." This world is however, a state of preparation as well as of probation, and if we do not seek to teach our children to love him and to love their fellow creatures on earth, how can we rationally expect them to learn to do so hereafter. For this thing the Lord must be enquired of, "to teach them as well as to impart all other gifts which he has promised to bestow. The female guardians of youth should then never forget that while each affection may be considered as an original feeling or emotion, existing in ourselves, which leads us to a particular conduct towards other men, without reference to any principle except the intuitive impulse of the emotion itself;*" and while it is unquestionably true that this part of our nature may to a considerable extent, be cultivated on lower principles than those recognised in the Bible, yet can they never be fully and harmoniously developed so as to subserve the designs of the Creator of mankind, except when they are fostered or repressed in conformity to divine direction. Many excellent christians in the education of their children bestow too little attention on the culture of the kindly affections of our nature. They would consider themselves highly criminal if they neglected to enforce principles of veracity,

* Abercrombie on the Philosophy of the Moral Feelings.

justice, and practical benevolence, and yet they employ comparatively, scarce any effort in seeking to train their offspring by precept or example, as a matter of duty, to be sympathising and studiously considerate of the feelings of others. The duty in the one case is however no less distinctly stated and authoritatively enforced than in the other. What words can be more explicit than the following, "Weep with them that weep, and rejoice with them that rejoice." "Bear ye one another's burden, and so fulfil the law of Christ." "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." "*Consider one another.*" Our blessed Redeemer in this respect should be regarded as our example, no less than in other parts of practical godliness. It is beautifully affirmed as having been one reason why he entered into such close companionship with sorrow, and received it into his own bosom so deeply, that he might be able to know how to succor us when we are tempted; and the christian in the hour of severe affliction feels that the fact of his being able fully to appreciate and sympathise with his people under their sufferings, is one of unspeakable consolation. This duty is unquestionably more difficult to practice than many others, for it is comparatively easy to deny ourselves indulgences of time and money, to minister to the bodily or spiritual necessities of others; but to make the effort to enter into their feelings and circumstances, so as to be able accurately to appreciate their trials, make allowances for their infirmities, especially when they are of a kind entirely different from those to which we are constitutionally predisposed; can only be practised habitually by such as have had their affections disciplined by a divine teacher. Those who have not been taught to be considerate and sympathising in childhood, will rarely be found

manifesting these graces in after life; this reflection should incite us to exertion now, that we may not be instrumental in withholding them from the exercise of that sweet sympathising spirit, which, when exhibited by those who are striving to be the sons and daughters of consolation, renders their ministrations more healing to the wounded and broken hearted, than any other human application. Costly alms, or even substantial services, rendered without this gracious accompaniment, may only lacerate more deeply the wounded and sensitive spirit; while its manifestation, when the donor has nought else to bestow, may serve to soothe and tranquilize the bosom agitated by affliction.

While religion teaches that the present life is designed to be a season of probation, it no less certainly informs us that the circumstances under which the Almighty places his creatures in this world, are the most conducive to the attainment of highest happiness by each; and that it is the part of humility as well as of true wisdom, to study to conform to his will, as manifested in the station to which he has appointed us! How important then is it that in the preparatory season of moral discipline, the subjects of it have inwrought into their nature by maternal example and precept, the lessons of contentment and thankful enjoyment of the numberless blessings placed within the reach of the generality of the youth of our country! But alas! in how many instances are the wise designs of a merciful God contravened by the very beings to whom he has delegated the visible agency in the disciplining of the children of America. The voice of discontent may be often heard from their lips, and their brows are frequently seen clouded with care, which speaks too plainly a want of full and unreserved confidence in God. Our children are not, I fear, accustomed as they ought, to have their mercies national

and personal, pointed out with sufficient vividness, nor to have that lesson pressed on them with due earnestness, which is so essential to the moral well-being of a people and of private individuals, "in whatsoever state" one is, "therewith to be content."

It may not be unadvisable to throw out a few hints as to the great importance of early training children to reverential and systematic religious habits. As soon as the infant tongue is loosened, let the little knee be taught to bend in its morning and evening orisons. The service will at first probably consist of but a few simple words, repeated after the mother's dictation, yet they should be pronounced with reverence and feeling. Almost uniformly, a desire will be manifested to attend to this duty, instead of compulsion being requisite to enforce it; provided the young and imitative creature has been accustomed to see others similarly employed at the returning seasons. Some excellent parents I know defer to a later period, the commencement of habits of regular prayer, from an idea that while the mind is so imperfectly developed, its conceptions both of the act itself and of the being addressed, must be very crude and deficient in reverence. But should we not remember that he, to whose ear we seek to direct the first faint aspirations of the infant soul, is one who knows perfectly its infirmities, and has expressly informed us that it is a feature of the divine mind, that he can be touched with a sense of them. I conceive it to be ill-judged in a parent to attempt to assist her children's minds in their attempts to grasp the truth by representing the Almighty under names which may be supposed calculated to render the nature of his existence less mysterious to infantive comprehension. Thus some are taught to speak of the Almighty as the *Good man*; but a child will almost uni-

formly associate appropriate images with the ideas presented to its mind, and they who have been in early life accustomed to hear the Almighty spoken of under the epithet alluded to, will find themselves subsequently compelled to break up the association under which they have personified the first person in the blessed Trinity. But to return to the formation at an early period of systematic habits of devotion. When the knee has not been taught to bow in prayer to God while young and pliant, it is surprising with what pertinacity and pride it will in riper years resist any effort that may be made to extort this mark of obeisance towards the Almighty. I have known several remarkable examples of this kind. One was a gentleman highly endowed by nature both in heart and intellect; a member of a wealthy, educated, and highly influential family of our country. In early life however, his religious culture had been entirely neglected. In early manhood his attention was arrested powerfully by the preaching of the gospel, and the Holy Spirit wrought with extraordinary pungency upon his conscience. He felt himself self-condemned and liable to eternal condemnation; without hope and without God in the world. In the depth of his emotion, he so far conquered his natural pride of heart as to seek counsel from the minister of Christ under whose preaching his conscience had been awakened. With deep feeling he laid open his inmost soul to his clerical friend, who proposed previous to the close of their interview, that they should unite in prayer. But here! mark the disastrous consequences resulting from failure of duty in a moral directness of youth. The self-condemned and trembling soul, humbled as it already was, found an almost insurmountable repugnance in making this visible manifestation of its necessities, and its need of divine mercy.

Never having been taught to bow his knee in prayer during childhood, he felt as if he could not compel himself to it in the pride of manhood. His friend however, knew not the mighty struggle that was passing within his breast, and kneeled as he was wont, with cheerful alacrity himself; the youthful enquirer felt instinctively constrained to do so likewise, and side by side, they poured out the fulness of their hearts together, and from that hour they were linked in affection and sympathy, as father and son, in the bonds of the gospel; and as fellow ambassadors for Christ, they are now laboring in the vineyard of their Master.

With no less vigilance should a mother early teach her children the duty of daily self-examination into their thoughts, words, and actions, and to spread them out before God in prayer. Equally important is it to instruct them from tender infancy to hallow the Sabbath and reverence the sanctuary, and duly, as worshippers, to appear within the courts of the Lord. Let them early be accustomed to contribute out of their little means to the various religious and benevolent societies of the day, and let a sense of their responsibilities as stewards of God, be impressed upon them. It is well to habituate them to perform acts of kindness, especially such as involve the exercise of petty acts of self-denial, which will be most salutary to their hearts.

It may be enquired what ground of encouragement have the moral guardians of youth? We reply the greatest possible! Truly such may be ready to exclaim, "we are weak and impotent, and our work is immensely arduous and difficult." God admits this truth, and has ample provision to supply our exigencies. He meets the timid and anxious mother with this precious assurance, "thy

God hath commanded thy strength;" or as another version still more beautifully renders the same passage, "thy God hath sent forth strength for thee." "If any man lack wisdom let him ask of God who giveth to all liberally, and upbraideth not, and it *shall be given.*" "In Christ Jesus all fulness dwells." Woman has therefore only to stretch out her hand and "take hold of his strength," as he has repeatedly directed her to do, and she shall be assisted in her work.

What encouragement does the experience of the christian world afford to believing women! A striking case in point is given us in the memoirs of one of God's chosen saints, the late Mrs. Hawkes, whose interesting biography, from the pen of Miss Cecil, is a treasure to the religious world. On the occasion of re-visiting her parental roof after her own conversion and the death of her parents, she remarks in her private journal; "I have been shutting myself up in my dear departed mother's chamber, the very walls and furniture of which are sacred. A thousand times have I marked her retiring into it for purposes of devotion. Often have I overheard her strong cries and tears to God, and often caught the sound of MY CHILDREN, as if that interest was uppermost. At morning, noon and evening, she never failed to retire to read and pray. Thousands of tears has she shed in this chamber, when I have sometimes had the privilege of kneeling by her side. How present is her image! How sweet my communion with her departed spirit. Little did I then know the value of her intercession for her children, or the weight of her example as a christian. Thank God! I know it now, and abhor myself in proportion as I estimate her Oh! may my mother's God be my God! He graciously carried her through many years of weakness and sorrow.

He enabled her to walk worthy of her high calling; and he stood by her in a dying hour. Her last words were, for me to die is gain—and I will pray for my children while I have breath.” Those faithful prayers were answered in the conversion of her children and grand-children. Several among the former became distinguished christians, whose bright examples perpetuated in writing, will continue to enlighten the church of Christ till the end of time.

The christian should duly appreciate her privileges in having her authority recognised and accredited by the word of God. He has delegated it to her by a formal act, and he allows her, and even directs her to sanction every exercise of it by an appeal to his decree, who has invested her in her physical weakness with a power amply sufficient to control, and if necessary, coerce her offspring; even those of the stronger sex. She can prove to them her right to command the expression of their respect and submission, as well as her obligation to punish any violation of the laws of God or man, cognizable by her authority. Thus have I sought to encourage by the foregoing lines, the natural guardians of children, by precept and example in their endeavors to augment their influence over the moral nature of those committed to them. But my limits necessarily forbid my doing more than suggesting hints to be improved and carried out by mature reflection on the part of others. This chapter is but a skeleton of a volume that might be written, or which has been written already on the same subject!

CHAPTER V.

HINTS ON THE INTELLECTUAL CULTURE OF YOUTH.

Although it be an unquestionable fact that the human mind when properly disciplined, derives its highest satisfaction in contemplating its fellow creatures, from the consideration that they are moral beings, yet would it be doing manifest injustice to the crowning work of creation were no attention bestowed likewise on the intellectual capabilities of man.

Since the human race is uniformly represented in scripture as having the root of its disorder in the heart, and not in the mind, the culture of the former has been rendered of paramount importance, and on its restoration to spiritual life the destiny of man as an immortal creature has been made dependant. Nevertheless, the intellectual powers should by no means be permitted to remain uncultivated when opportunities for so doing are presented; nor should the female guardians of infancy allow themselves to be unmindful of the fact that from the proper direction given to the mental operations of their children, most important consequences must result. These rich gifts may be wasted so far as the original intentions of their Almighty bestower are considered, by being devoted to pursuits which are important only in reference to the present life; they may be abused by being directed to subjects which from being merely selfish in their end and aim, are unworthy of the attention of those of whom God declared, "they were created for *my glory*;" or what is still more lamentable, they may become a curse to their possessors when employed in the unhallowed design of misleading a fellow creature, or openly defying the majesty of the Governor of the universe; while, when properly disciplined and

kept in strict subordination to the will of God, they may by his blessing, become eminently instrumental in promoting his interests, the happiness of mankind generally, and that of the individual possessor supremely.

Very superficial observation will suffice to convince us that desirable soever as such an improvement of God's gifts may be, yet is it nevertheless far from being common among the mass of our fellow creatures. A question involuntarily presents itself, how far can we hope to be individually instrumental in palliating, or even remedying such defects in the rising generation by whom we are encircled.

In the preface of this work devoted to the consideration of the women of classical antiquity, I remarked that many of the talented of our sex in ancient Rome had been considered highly influential in developing the character of not a few of those, who at different periods, had been pronounced among the brightest ornaments of the nation. These gifted females not only presided over the education of their own offspring, but were in many instances selected as the preceptresses of sons of patrician families, not allied to them by blood, who from their birth and station were expected to take a leading part in the concerns of their country.

The method and details of education have however, like the frame-work of society, undergone a most important change since the time when the Gracchi received instruction from their celebrated mother, or since Cicero and his friend Atticus in their youthful days repaired eagerly to the accomplished Attica, to submit to her inspection their juvenile exercises in eloquence, for the benefit of her corrections and suggestions. My object at present being to collect information for the practical improvement

of intelligent christian females, it will be expedient to seek for data in the records of a nation, which being more than any other, closely identified with our own by a common profession of Protestantism, as well as in other important circumstances, the conclusions deduced therefrom, may be more applicable to my purpose.

Few names have been more immortalized in the philosophical and scientific world than that of Francis Bacon, Lord Verulam, who amidst the bright galaxy of genius which adorned the Elizabethan age shone with pre-eminent lustre. He entered upon the pursuit of knowledge, to use his own eloquent language, as into "a rich store-house, for the glory of God and the relief of man's estate," and paused not until he made "all knowledge to be his province," and in his brilliant intellect originated and digested a system of philosophy, which was destined to perpetuate his fame by enlightening and dignifying his species. Bacon, however, had as it were from the bosom of his mother, imbibed the love of learning, for which she was distinguished, and to her judicious training under Providence, was indebted for the intellectual eminence to which he subsequently attained. As if in reference to his own pre-eminent advantages in early life he remarks, "it is because many, except by indirect and slight information, are suffered to embark upon the voyage without any accurate instruction as to the tempests by which they may be agitated, that so many believing they are led by light from heaven, are wrecked and lost, and so few reach the true haven of a well ordered mind, that temple of God which he graceth with his perfection and blesseth with his peace, not suffering it to be moved, although the mountains be carried into the depths of the sea." Nor was it alone as a mother, that Lady Bacon was permitted to become

eminently serviceable to mankind by her skilful culture of the intellectual nature of youth; from the reputation she had secured for wisdom and learning as well as piety, she was appointed preceptress to the heir of the British throne, subsequently Edward VI. To a woman was assigned the honor of first imparting instruction to one, who according to the testimony of a modern writer, competent to pronounce on such a point, proved himself in his fourteenth year, on an extraordinary occasion, able to retain the free exercise of his judgment, untrammeled by the powerful minds by whom he was surrounded, and in wisdom showed that he excelled the best and wisest of his counsellors, while "in moral feeling he seems to have advanced the farthest beyond his age."*

At the mention of the name of Sir William Jones a sympathetic chord is touched, which in the case of thousands of individuals in both hemispheres, might vibrate in unison. In the short space of forty-seven years this extraordinary man acquired an amount of knowledge varied in kind, and profound in degree, which by those who were most intimately acquainted with him, is asserted to have been seldom equalled, and never perhaps surpassed. His philological attainments were extraordinary, and with the keys of learning in his possession, he was enabled to unlock, for the benefit of mankind, the treasures of ancient and modern literature. The study of the law he prosecuted with enthusiasm, and so thoroughly informed himself as to the principles of the constitution of his country, that his legal productions were stamped with the approbation of the most distinguished members of his profession. Mental and moral philosophy formed a favorite sub-

* Southey's Book of the Church, chap. xiii.

ject of study to him, and in other branches of natural science he took extreme delight, and it is almost impossible to specify any science which was not grasped, and successfully mastered by this profound and patient scholar, while the fabric of his mental and moral nature was beautified by the graces of the most kindly and fervent affections, and what is an unspeakably delightful reflection, was sanctified by the grace of God. He who attained to such a conspicuous position in the temple of science, entered and abode in it, in the spirit of a little child, adorned with those christian excellencies, without which our Lord declares that no man can enter into his kingdom.

It was a widowed mother, however, that was permitted in the providence of God to raise the torch by which the infant steps of this great and good man were to be directed when first commencing his ascent to that eminence to which he was destined to attain. Mrs. Jones was endowed by Providence with an unusually strong intellect, which she diligently cultivated and from the most laudable motives. She entered upon mathematics under her husband's instructions, in order that she might become qualified to act as the preceptress of her nephew, and she pursued these studies during the short period of her married life, until she made herself mistress of Trigonometry and the theory of Navigation, which were considered desirable attainments for her; her nephew being destined for nautical life. When she found herself widowed and in straitened circumstances, with two young children dependent on her, she nobly declined accepting the flattering offers of a titled friend who earnestly desired that she, with her children, might become the inmates of her castle. Mrs. Jones wisely judging the atmosphere of sunshine which surrounded the mansion of her friend, ill calcu-

lated to develope to advantage the character of her son, withdrew to her humble abode, where rejecting the severity of domestic discipline, she strenuously exerted herself in leading the mind of her beloved boy "to knowledge and exertion, by exciting his curiosity and directing it to useful objects." To his incessant importunities for information on all subjects that engaged his attention, which habit of mind she sought carefully to cultivate, she constantly replied, "read and you will know;" a maxim to the observance of which, remarks his friend and biographer, "he always acknowledged himself indebted for his future attainments."

In his ninth year young Jones received a severe bodily injury, the fracture of his thigh bone, which, by many might have been considered only as an unfortunate accident, since it occasioned the subject of it to be detained from school for a whole twelve months. His mother under these circumstances evinced no less practical wisdom than she had shown on other occasions, since she endeavored to draw a blessing from the very affliction of her child. When the first pressure of pain was removed she would not suffer the quiet season he was spending in the sick room to remain unimproved. She became his constant companion, and assiduously exerted herself in selecting judicious books, from the pages of which she read to him daily, and when his health amended, she instructed him in the rudiments of drawing, in which he afterwards excelled.

The influence which Mrs. Jones obtained over her son's mind, and which continued to the latest moment of her long life, is well deserving of consideration, since from the success which attended her efforts, we may be able to draw useful hints for our own practical improvement. In com-

paring our circumstances with those of individuals elevated by rank or wealth to commanding stations in society, we may find so few points of coincidence existing as to induce us to think the line of conduct pursued by another, under circumstances so much more favorable than we enjoy, to be for us impracticable. But the station occupied by Mrs. Jones was scarcely at all, if any wise more elevated than that assigned to the mass of the wives and daughters of the most respectable mechanics of our own country, and advantages nearly equal to those which she enjoyed, might probably at this moment be within the reach of many females of our country, would they but diligently exert themselves at self-improvement. Her father was a respectable cabinet maker of London; her husband the son of a plain farmer of Wales, and by his own vigorous exertion and industry alone, enabled to supply the deficiencies of early instruction. This gentleman began his career as a teacher of mathematics on board a British man-of-war, and subsequently established himself in the same capacity in London, where he ultimately gained considerable reputation in his profession. In contemplating the maternal labors of Mrs. Jones, I am strongly reminded of a sketch given by a master-hand, of the process of mental culture, the excellence of which will be a sufficient apology for its insertion in the present chapter. "Abstracting entirely" observes this author, "from the culture of the moral powers, how extensive and difficult is the business of intellectual improvement! To watch over the associations which children form in their tender years; to give them habits of mental activity; to rouse their curiosity and to direct it to proper objects; to exercise their ingenuity and invention; to cultivate in their minds a turn for speculation, and at the same time to preserve their

attention alive to the objects around them; to awaken their minds to the beauties of nature, and to inspire them with a relish for intellectual enjoyment; these form *a part* of the business of education, and yet the execution even of this part, requires an acquaintance with the general principles of our nature, which seldom falls to the share of those to whom the instruction of youth is commonly entrusted.”*

The task which one of the first philosophers of the present century pronounced so difficult we have seen, was happily accomplished, not only by the learned and amiable Lady Bacon, but by Mrs. Jones in her very subordinate sphere of action, as well as by many other females whose names might be cited in this place.

The culture of the more important attributes of human nature having engrossed our attention in the preceding chapter, it will be desirable at this time to consider briefly the early cultivation of the mental powers, though it is impossible exclusively to direct our enquiries to one or the other of these two subjects, between which such an intimate connection must of necessity exist.

The mind of man cannot, I conceive, be *partially* cultivated to advantage, since to its harmonious development it is necessary that a judicious attention be bestowed on each of its faculties. On the other hand, it must be remarked that most individuals from constitutional organization, or circumstances in their early history evince a stronger bias in one direction than in others. A mother who attentively watches the incipient manifestations of intellect in her children, should ponder as to what may be the ultimate effect on their character, if the peculiar ten-

* Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind.

dencies which characterize each should be allowed to become fully developed. When there is a taste for some one science early exhibited, I distrust the judgment of those who endeavor to thwart the inclinations of the child, provided there be no very strong reasons for such a course of conduct, and unless they be calculated to disqualify the individual for the station in which it has been placed by Providence.

The infancy of the celebrated Pascal presents a striking illustration of the inexpediency of attempting to oppose the natural bent of the mind, exhibited in its decided predilection for one rational pursuit. The father of this gifted individual was an able mathematician, living on terms of intimacy with many of the most scientific men who were collected at that period in the capital of France. Having chalked out, however, in his own mind, a system of classical instruction for his son, considering it a more appropriate introduction to the theological studies for which the boy was destined, he peremptorily forbade the latter from even looking into mathematical works, or from listening to his own conversation, or that of his friends on the subject, and whenever the ardent child importuned him for permission to commence the forbidden study, he was always silenced by a positive denial to his request. Let it not be supposed that Monsieur Pascal acted from caprice, or was negligent of parental duty. On the contrary, while yet in the prime of life, he had, after losing his excellent wife, withdrawn from a brilliant circle of the most select Parisian society, and resigned the emoluments of a lucrative office that he might educate his children, especially his only son, who was the object of highest interest to him. By no means deficient in intelligence or in tenderness, he only lacked judgment.

Young Pascal's ardor for mathematics was irrepressible, and disclosed itself in a remarkable manner before he had completed his twelfth year. Having interrogated his father very closely about that time as to the nature of geometry, the latter replied concisely, that it was "a science which taught the method of making exact figures, and of finding their proportions to each other." The boy was then prohibited from talking or even thinking farther upon the subject; but impatient under the restraint imposed, and impelled onward even by the faint light which had been cast upon his path, his thoughts, even during seasons allowed for recreation, became instinctively concentrated in one direction. He was permitted to amuse himself in a large vacant room of the paternal mansion, where he incessantly occupied himself in sketching on the floor with a piece of charcoal, figures, to which he appropriated the names of *rounds, lines, and bars*, but which were in reality, strictly geometrical. On one occasion he was thus employed, when surprised by his father, who, to his amazement, found the boy to whom he had strictly prohibited the study of mathematics, actually engaged in demonstrating for his own satisfaction, the same truths which are set forth in the 23d Proposition of Euclid, sustaining his reasonings by definitions, and axioms of his own invention. Overwhelmed with emotion at his own blindness in not having previously appreciated the master-passion of his son's intellect, Monsieur Pascal no longer opposed his desire for the study of mathematics, since, as he remarked to a scientific friend, his child had in reality, for himself invented it. In a short time young Pascal made so rapid a progress in his favorite study, that he was elected member of a literary society, which was the nucleus, from whence arose the Royal Academy of Sciences of Paris.

An interesting incident is related in the intellectual history of the late learned Edward Daniel Clarke, L. L. D., which is illustrative of the benefits that may result to society from the judicious penetration of the maternal mind when detecting the bias of the youthful intellect, it seeks to encourage it to advantage. During the early childhood of this gentleman, he on one occasion accompanied his widowed mother on a visit to some friends who resided at a considerable distance. At the expiration of the period allotted to their stay, the carriage in which Mrs. Clarke was to make her journey, was ordered to the door of her friend's mansion, when to her surprise and chagrin, she found not only Edward established in the vehicle, but every corner of the coach filled with packages. The pockets of the carriage protruded also in an unsightly manner. In the impulse of the moment, Mrs. Clarke ordered the coachman to eject the litter before she seated herself. Edward uttered an exclamation, which drew the attention of his mother towards him. The mantling color on his cheeks, and his glistening eyes, indicated great distress, and proved to the penetrating eye of Mrs. Clarke that her son's feelings were deeply interested in the preservation of the stores which he had collected in his love for the beauties of nature. She checked the coachman who was beginning to execute her orders, and enquired, which of his treasures Edward was most desirous to retain. "Oh! why," exclaimed the child in a supplicating and tremulous tone of voice, "oh why! need any be destroyed? This has some new minerals wrapped in it; that some pretty shells, and the other some fine moss!"

The appeal of the little boy was not made in vain! It caused his mother to pause and consider what consequences might result to her child's mental tastes and asso-

ciations, were she to do violence to them. Her own convenience and gratification were made to yield to the thoughts of her son's good. The carriage proceeded homewards laden with the stores collected by the young votary of science, and Edward Daniel Clarke continued to retain that love for those studious pursuits which subsequently induced him to travel in foreign lands in search of still more ample information than he could obtain from the libraries of his own country. The journals of his tours through various interesting regions were given to the public, and have become the medium for diffusing healthful enjoyment and scientific instruction to the religious and literary classes of society in the two hemispheres.

Nor let it be supposed that it is only while attending to the education of their sons, that females may be enabled to confer benefits on their families. The peculiar tastes and tendencies of the intellectual nature may be readily discerned, and carefully and usefully developed in our daughters likewise. The admirable Hannah More in early childhood was distinguished, says her biographer, for "quickness of apprehension, retentiveness of memory, and thirst after knowledge. . . . Between the age of three and four; her mother thinking it time to teach her to read, found to her astonishment that by an eager attention to the instructions bestowed on her sisters, she had already made considerable progress. At eight years of age so eagerly did she thirst after historical knowledge, that she would, hour after hour, sit upon her father's knee, to receive from him the information which he had treasured up in his retentive memory; pecuniary difficulties having deprived him of his library. He was wont to repeat passages in the original, that the ear of his little daughter might be gratified by the sound of the classic language, and after-

wards translate them into English for her information. The greatest enjoyment she could picture to herself in childhood was that she "might one day be rich enough to have a whole quire of paper to herself;" and every scrap of the same material which she could meet with, was treasured up and filled from time to time with her juvenile compositions, in each of which some useful moral was inculcated. A fact which is somewhat remarkable, and may be regarded as a presage of the celebrity which she was to obtain in after life as one of the most useful and popular moral writers of the age.

Elizabeth Smith was probably one of the most successful female scholars of modern times, considering the brevity of her existence. Her "acquirements, which would have been distinguished in an university, were meekly softened and beautifully shaded by the gentle exertion of every domestic virtue, and the unaffected exercise of every feminine employment." According to the account of her admirable mother, she manifested strong intellectual tendencies when a mere infant of three years of age. At that time she would leave an elder brother and younger sister to play together, while she withdrew to some quiet corner to employ herself in poring over such books as her nursery library afforded. At the age of thirteen, her parents having met with an unexpected reverse of fortune, Elizabeth undertook, and efficiently discharged the duties of a governess to her younger sisters. Nor did she, while teaching others, remit her exertions in improving herself. She simultaneously attended to the instruction of her sisters, and carried on her studies with diligence and remarkable application of mind. Numerous languages, ancient and modern, oriental and European, being mastered by her with remarkable facility, and by her own exertions, with scarce any assistance from others.

Maria Jewsbury acknowledged to a friend in later life, that when only nine years old, she had felt the utmost anxiety "*to write a book,*" and that as she grew older the idea was continually present to her thoughts and became a permanent passion of her soul. Few, unless gifted with uncommon penetration, could probably have conjectured the state of her feelings at that period, or could have imagined that the young female who was plodding onwards, assiduously discharging domestic duties of the most laborious kind, would one day by her intellectual and moral excellence, secure to herself the friendship and esteem of the wise and good, or become the pious, enlightened, and judicious counsellor of the young!

To the names of the excellent women already cited, who in early life gave decided manifestations of strength of character, I may add that of one of my own country-women—the late Mrs. Susan Huntington, of Boston, Mass., who, ere the prime of life, departed from this world, to join that invisible host who will continue to have their influence perpetuated for the benefit of mankind in the page of biography; and who, as a living writer remarks, "more effectually color and shape the character of society, than they could if their disembodied spirits were permitted to hold communion with the living, and suggest, control, or inspire them with the same feelings and sentiments, which their memory or their productions absolutely do impress."* The childhood of Mrs. Huntington was characterized by moral graces no less than by intellectual tendencies. At the age of three years she came to the thoughtful consideration of that great point which it is

* Introductory essay to the Glasgow edition of "Memoirs of Mrs. Huntington, by J. Montgomery, of Sheffield, Eng."

supremely important to have decided in the case of every individual of our race. After dwelling on the matter to herself, and summing up the arguments that presented themselves to her infantine mind with clearness and distinctness, she came to a decision so marked, as caused the fact with the circumstances of time and place, to remain indelibly impressed on her memory through after life.

The names adduced on the present occasion were undoubtedly those of individuals gifted by nature in more than ordinary measure, but let it not be imagined that the talents of any of them were too uncommon to render the moral deducible from their histories unsuited for practical application to the females of America, who have been placed in guardianship over the youth of our country. We may too, perhaps, be allowed the privilege of developing worth similar in kind, though inferior in degree; and who can pretend to determine whether there may not be imbedded in the virgin soil of our republic, gems which may not be unworthy to compete in purity and brilliancy with those of the mother land, and which only require their presence to be detected, and their quality to be determined, in order to their being shaped and fashioned to the highest beauty. Some of the mothers of America, more particularly of her Western States, may possibly suppose that the circumstances under which they are placed are too unpropitious to permit them to hope or venture to expect a free development of genius in their daughters. But where can one be found whose situation can be more "painfully and laboriously domestic" than that assigned to Maria Jewsbury? According to her account she could neither legitimately read or write till the day was over; yet notwithstanding these difficulties, she was enabled to pursue knowledge with success, and by her

energy and resolution overcame obstacles which at first sight might have seemed insurmountable.

I apprehend Mrs. Hannah More's extraordinary usefulness did not arise so much from the possession of pre-eminent talents, as from the fact of her sound and vigorous understanding, having been uncommonly well regulated, and her moral feelings having been early brought, and habitually maintained in a healthful state. She was not a *genius*, according to the usual acceptation of the word; because no one faculty had been allowed to shoot forth uncontrolled, to the injury of the remaining ones. But she was enabled to discipline her intellectual and moral nature, with great success. While by her writings she awakened the attention of the reading world in the eastern and western continents; during more than a half century kept the press in full employment; had her publications welcomed alike to the palaces of the great and the cottages of the poor, yet was she to the latest period of her prolonged and useful life, emphatically a *feminine character*; sober, practical, meek with all her wisdom, and crowned with humility, notwithstanding honors had been accumulating upon her during more than fifty successive years. She was indeed literally,

“A creature not too bright or good,
For human nature’s daily food.

* * * * *

A perfect woman nobly planned,
To warn, to comfort, and command.”

Since experience has been shown to sustain the opinion that the female mind has on many occasions been permitted to discipline and mature the germs of intellects whose existence its penetration had discovered, the writer would for her own consideration and that of others of her

sex, to whom the charge of youthful characters may be entrusted, seek to enumerate the leading qualities which tend to constitute that well-balanced mind, which it should be our habitual aim, both to mature in ourselves, and to cultivate in those subjected to our influence. On a point of so much vital importance, I would not presume to depend solely on my own judgment, but would rather sustain my own views by the authority of the wise and experienced in intellectual philosophy. Among these, I feel disposed to yield especial deference to Dr. Abercrombie, of Edinburgh, whose views are as clear and accurate, and his reasonings as perspicuous and satisfactory in mental as in moral science, and who for the practical application which he is ever ready to make of his subject to the cause of vital religion, claims the especial regard of the professed disciples of our Lord and Saviour.

I. Scripture and experience both concur with the ablest writers, in the opinion that no one quality is more essential to moral and intellectual excellence than that of *attention*. Lord Bacon and Sir Isaac Newton, to whose views most ordinary minds will be willing to yield respectful deference, agreed in ascribing to this habit of mind in themselves, the discoveries which they had severally been enabled to make in human science. Nor is it requisite alone for the philosopher and skilful mathematician; it is no less essential for the professional man and mechanic. It is needed by women too, in their more retired but still important sphere of action, whether they be compelled to labor with their heads or their hands. How much *attention* must be given to the subject, even before "the threaded steel" can be made to "fly swiftly, and the task proceed!" And yet on the proper employment and diligent application of this most unassuming of all implements, the comfort and en-

joyment of every domestic circle of our wide spread union, is necessarily greatly dependent. The history of the steam engine which has exerted so remarkable an influence in the affairs of our globe, and which seems almost to have annihilated space by the change which it has effected in the rapidity of locomotion within the last century, presents a striking illustration of the advantages which may arise to society from the *attention* of one young and inventive genius, being concentrated on objects with which its routine of duty makes it familiar. When this "king of machines" was first put in operation in the British Empire it required unremitting attention on the part of the individual who was employed to facilitate and perfect its movements, by continually opening certain stop-cocks, to introduce "steam into the cylinders, and for ejecting the cold shower for its condensation." On one occasion, we are informed on good authority, that an intelligent boy of an active mind, was employed in this service. The continual exclamations of delight from certain of his juvenile companions, while engaged in their boyish sports, which reached his ear, strongly excited his desires to join with them in their amusements. This anxiety quickened his ingenuity — attention became rivetted in the hope of finding out some prospect of escape from this state of durance. He observed facts which never before had arrested his notice; his inventive powers were all put in requisition to contrive a remedy; success attended his efforts, and "for the first time, the steam engine went by itself," and no other workman was thenceforward needed, but the fireman, who was required to attend on the furnace.*

II. When children have been taught the habit of attention, let them be studiously accustomed to discipline their

*Life of James Watt, by M. Arago, as quoted in Monthly Review.

thoughts, and guard against allowing them to wander at random from one subject to another. Judgment will be necessary on this point, but not more than any reflecting woman of moderate abilities is competent to exercise, who can readily learn by experience to determine the proper point at which one pursuit or subject of thought may be permitted to be superseded by another. If attention be required too long to one thing, weariness will ensue, and disgust may probably be excited. While it is undoubtedly true that too "much study is a weariness to the flesh," it is no less a verity that the species of mental effort which we are accustomed to specify by the term *study*, is an indispensable part of a good education. I have known fond mothers, so short sighted to the best interests of their children, as to attempt to relieve them in effect from the labor of learning, by drilling their lessons into them by innumerable repetitions. If a little creature is too young to be taught to read, such a practice may be serviceable and expedient, in moderation, but when it is merely to relieve an older child from a duty which it is perfectly competent to discharge, the spectacle is painful. The drudgery of learning may be spared to them to a certain extent, and it will be considerate and proper to do so by our own efforts; but if we attempt to supersede the necessity of diligent exertions on their part, we shall fail to promote their happiness effectually, and we shall injure them greatly also. They were designed to find a part of the discipline of their moral and intellectual nature in the practice of study, and if we deprive them of the proper opportunities for doing so, on us will devolve the responsibility of defeating the divine intentions, while they will be forced to reap the disastrous fruits of our attempt to reverse the order of Providence.

III. Few persons at all conversant with children, can fail to detect their propensity to indulge in that enquiring state of mind, sometimes injudiciously checked under the impression that it is mere curiosity; an expression, the meaning of which is at once understood, even by the illiterate. The more active the mind is in constitutional organization, the more incessant will be its efforts to enlarge its ideas, but the manifestation of such a spirit will call for great judgment on the part of the mother. It may be allowed to degenerate into a pernicious and annoying habit, or it may become, to use the words of another, "an engine more powerful in the hands of judicious and wise parents, than the boasted fulcrum of the Syracusan philosopher."*

A case in point now recurs to me, which illustrates the distinction existing between the enquiring state of mind that is desirable to be indulged under proper restrictions, and the curiosity which is common to undisciplined minds of every age. Some years since, the writer was on one occasion visiting the Academy of Fine Arts in the city of Philadelphia, during the season of exhibition, when as usual at the same period, it possessed for several weeks, more than ordinary attractions. Among other objects that riveted the gaze of spectators, was a dark slab, exhibiting a scene from sacred history, taken in bas-relief. Before this, many individuals were collected, conjecturing whether the black material was marble or some metallic substance. Several of our party were engaged in determining the probabilities of the case; the rules of the institution forbidding us to call in to our assistance the sense of touch. In this position we had an opportunity of hearing not a

* Mrs. E. Hamilton's Letters on Education.

few rapid and puerile remarks from the lips of certain adult visitors. At length a gentleman approached, known advantageously to the public as a professional and scientific man, followed by a group of young sons, one of whom, apparently not more than six or seven years of age, would have arrested the attention of any observing spectator, from his marked intellectuality of countenance. His elder brothers gave the specimen of bas-relief a hasty glance, and passed on to examine the paintings, which, in their eyes, were more attractive. The little boy I have specified, appeared at once eagerly solicitous to determine for himself what "the black picture could be made of." He was boldly preparing to mount upon an object which stood in front to satisfy himself by touching the surface, when his father checked him, and stated the established rules on this point. The ardent child showed by his countenance, deep disappointment, but he did not attempt to disobey the command of his father. Fixed in apparent reverie, he stood for some moments on the same spot, when suddenly, as if a new idea had struck his mind, he plucked his father's small walking stick from his hand, and gave several smart taps with it, on the object in question. To the sound produced, he turned his eager ear, and then with a countenance suffused with pleasure, exclaimed, "Father it is metal, I have sounded and proved it!" The parental smile indicated great satisfaction, and it was responded to cordially by each of our party. The child on this occasion, showed to no small advantage, when contrasted with many older persons who had been ready to wonder and offer their several conjectures, but yet had been content to remain unsatisfied.

IV. Children should be assiduously guarded in respect to their habits of mental association. No woman accus-

omed to scrutinize the habits of her own mind, can fail to observe that when two or more facts have on one occasion, been pressed upon her attention simultaneously, they will thenceforward, from a tendency natural to her, become so associated together in her memory that the recollection of one of them, will almost instinctively lead to that of the others. She will be likewise conscious that subjects or trains of thought can be also closely associated, so that the consideration of one will suggest another, and so on through an indefinite series, between the several links of which there will be a perceptible connection. The formation of these associations will, to a considerable extent, be influenced by the peculiar turn of mind and pursuits of individuals, but that the habit is susceptible of cultivation, and important in its consequences, should never be forgotten by those who are desirous of self improvement, or occupied in developing other and younger minds. Habits of correct association are no less essential to a daughter than to a son, though a deficiency in this respect, may not be so prominent in the one as in the other. But to a calm observer, in the system of domestic economy, the management of children and domestics, and even in the dress and manners of a lady, there will be evidence sufficient to convince him of the evils that will result from mental disorder on this point. The conduct or conversation of a weak or unprincipled nurse, has, sometimes, caused an infant to connect so strongly the idea of supernatural evils with a darkened atmosphere, that long after reason has convinced it of the folly of such ideas, the unfortunate association has continued to harass and trouble it, and sometimes by circumstances of this kind, has the peace of a family circle been affected, and even the lives of others been exposed to danger.

V. The mother who neglects to aid and direct her offspring in the task of selecting from the mass of subjects which crowd upon their notice, such as are most deserving of their attention from peculiar circumstances, will fail to discharge an important part of her duty. The subject appears to have been less attended to in our own country than its importance demands, and the consequences of the omission are now perceptible in the frame-work of society, and will probably continue to be increasingly felt, unless the good sense of American women shall suggest a remedy. It would seem to be their opinion, as we look abroad on society, that the minds of their children are to be permitted the same unrestricted power to roam in the pursuit of intellectual acquisitions as of civil liberty. The mass of our republican sisters tenacious in their claims to equality of privilege, appear to consider it as an imputation on their own dignity and that of their families, to remind them of the expediency of a judicious selection of the subjects to which the attention of their children may be directed. It would readily appear as if one standard of education had been set forth by our national representatives to which all systems of instruction were to be made to approximate; so universally do we find the coincidence existing among the Seminaries of the East and West, of the North and South, in the branches of instruction and the routine of accomplishments set forth as desirable, nay as essential to these different sections of the union, whose local circumstances are so essentially diverse in many particulars. The daughters of the country merchant, small farmer, or mechanic of the West, are enjoined sedulously to attempt the study of the classics and mathematics, or to commence accomplishing themselves in music or drawing, no less assiduously than the offspring of our

wealthy citizens to whom as an immunity of their station, far greater leisure for such occupations will be allowed. Let American mothers arouse themselves from this illusion, which too often has its origin in pride, and instead of consulting the practice of others to know what their children should learn, let them rather exert their own good sense, and choose for them, and teach them to select for themselves, only those intellectual pursuits which reason points out as most likely to be serviceable and expedient for them. Certain objects of attention will press with peculiar prominence on each class of society, and on individuals severally, while others will be found of common interest to all collectively.

VI. We shall now be led to consider another important part of the intellectual nurture of youth, viz: the cultivation of a sound judgment, which is alike necessary when one is compelled to act, as when required only to think and decide upon the conduct and principles of others. This habit of mind is of vital importance, and where it is wanting in any character, its absence can never be compensated for by the possession of the highest gifts of genius, or the most extraordinary acquirements. Those blessed with it, however limited may be the range of their acquirements, or how moderate soever their abilities, have on the contrary, a reasonable prospect that they will prove themselves equal to the exigencies of circumstances in which they may be placed.

A gentleman of my acquaintance once remarked of a lady who was the mother of a large family, that "she was made to act and not to talk." Her understanding was moderate, her acquirements limited, but so just a proportion was maintained among her faculties, that she was enabled to fulfil to more advantage, those duties which

were in daily and hourly requisition, than many women whose intellectual advantages had been far greater. Many mothers are either so wholly unmindful of the exceeding importance of a sound judgment to their children, or are so inadequately informed of the mode in which it is to be cultivated or superinduced, when not possessed by nature, that they treat their offspring rather as machines who are to be impelled solely by the will of others, than as beings who are accountable to God for their sentiments and opinions, as well as for their actions; for their prejudices and partialities, no less than for their expressions. But if our youthful charge are never allowed the liberty of choice on any subject, if they are peremptorily required to frame their opinions by those of others, or to act always at their bidding as irresponsible beings, we shall leave them with minds unfurnished with principles to direct and sustain them in the hour, when on them a necessity for exertion shall be imposed, by their removal from our supervision, by death, or other providential circumstances. Let us then labor assiduously in conformity with apostolic injunction to *arm not* only ourselves, but those committed to us, with *sound minds*. Let us habituate them first to exercise liberty of choice on minor points, and when by their own free agency, they have entailed petty evils on themselves, by want of judgment, let us permit them the *privilege of suffering* the consequences of their decisions, since personal experience of this kind on a trifling occasion, may be the means under Providence, of correcting the judgment during the whole future life.

VII. In the remarks which are here thrown out in respect to the control desirable to be maintained over the intellectual character of the young, it would be improper not to offer some suggestions respecting the imagination, a

mental power, which probably more than any other, requires to be sternly kept in control, and to be regulated cautiously. It is however a component part of the mind, and existed in such a manner in unfallen man, as only to contribute to his moral and intellectual improvement, happiness and enjoyment. Neither should it be considered a duty incumbent on the christian to keep it in perpetual abeyance to the other faculties. It may be soundly and judiciously exercised by the most pious mind. The Bible sanctions such a practice, for the writings of the Prophets and the book of Psalms and that of Job exhibit proofs of imaginative powers of the highest order, sanctified by inspiration. So likewise do some of the finest uninspired compositions of which ancient or modern times can boast. In the exercise of imagination, we simply take, according to the authority of an able writer, "the component elements of real scenes, events or characters, and combine them anew, so as to form compounds which have no existence in nature."* We are not then under a necessity of forbidding all indulgence to the imaginative powers of our children, but we are charged with the solemn responsibility of watching the workings of their minds, and of studying to provide this part of their nature with wholesome nutriment, but never in such abundance as may cause it to be developed in an undue and unnatural proportion to their other faculties. The German poet, Kotzebue, whose talents were perverted to his own detriment, and to that of his fellow creatures — gave a useful warning to females on this point, when he took occasion to inform

* "Inquiries concerning the Intellectual Powers," by J. Abercrombie, M. D., F. R. S. To the authority of this valuable writer, the author would appeal in this brief summary of the most important features of a well regulated mind.

his readers that his mother found great delight in inspiring her son "with a taste for works of imagination, of which he soon grew enthusiastically fond." Our Almighty Parent has furnished us with innumerable opportunities for the legitimate exercise of this faculty. Let us then lead our children to the contemplation of those works with which He has beautified creation, and not allow their thoughts to wander through scenes of imagined wealth, ambition, frivolity, pleasure, or vice. Such habits must inevitably weaken the character in all respects, and unfit it to grapple effectively with the stern realities of life. Nay, it is a painful but a solemn truth, that at this moment, innumerable cases might be cited of individuals who have carried the perversion of imagination still farther, and allowed it so to blend itself with religion as to form a most dangerous and deceptive compound—a form of piety, but not the power. The want of vitality in religion being concealed from the individual, and sometimes from others, by a substitute of her own making, the materials for which were supplied by a diseased imagination.

At the present moment, Satan and the world are each severally calling in to their assistance, in the arduous conflict they are waging against the Sovereign of the universe, the imagination of man as their agent and effective ally. They know well, that to familiarize the minds of the young with impurity and vice, by embodying them in attractive forms, and placing them in scenes calculated to excite the feelings and rivet the attention on the routine of daily conduct of the depraved and guilty, is the first point to be gained, before persuading them actually to step forwards in the same ensnaring path. He or she, who has learned to regard vice when embodied in fiction, with complacency or interest, has, I fear, suffered an injury of no trifling kind,

that may insensibly lead to consequences of a dangerous nature. It is not long since, that a criminal previously to suffering the penalty of the law in England, for the murder of his master, Lord Russel, made a solemn avowal that to the perusal of the fictitious history of a villain by a popular writer of the present day, he ascribed his rapid progress in vice. Such a fact should speak volumes to the hearts of American mothers.

VIII. Attention may have been given by many mothers to the different features of a well regulated mind, which have been noticed in the preceding remarks, and yet the objects of their solicitude may have grievously disappointed their expectations? Because with all their exertions, one indispensable part of their office was omitted, the implantation of sound moral principles. This subject in detail, has been discussed in the preceding chapter, but I cannot conscientiously omit recurring to it again, since I consider all intellectual culture to be radically defective, which is not based on this principle, and completed in the same spirit. Experience fully verifies the truths of scripture on this point, as on all others. The greatest attainments in human learning made by any individual have proved insufficient to sustain the soul under the pressure of bodily suffering, the anguish of bereavement, or the anticipation of dissolution. The claims of the moral, have ever at that moment, asserted the superiority over the intellectual nature, and those whose talents had filled the world with admiration, and whose writings had secured the plaudits of millions, [have been compelled to feel as the shadows of death were obscuring the past, and the light of futurity was dawning on them, that they had in reality, been pursuing mere illusions. The mind enriched by the labors of a long life, and which had been looked to as the

centre of attraction by a world, has been forced vividly to realize that it was poor and beggared, when it stood upon the confines of that existence in which human knowledge will be swallowed up in the blaze of celestial truth. It is a fact worthy of attention, that the individuals to whom mankind have been permanently indebted have been generally such as maintained a sound condition of the moral feelings, in conjunction with intellectual attainments. The mere development of mind may dazzle for a time, and so it has frequently done, but those who have left their stamp and impress on generations for their benefit, have been morally as well as intellectually great. Such were Wycliffe, Roger Bacon, Boyle, Newton, and may I not add with propriety, a female name, that of Hannah More, whose piety was ever as practical, as her talents and acquirements were great.

No attempt has been made in this chapter to sketch any particular course of study. For this omission my reasons are various but satisfactory to my own mind. I disapprove wholly of attempting to set up *one standard* of study to which all youthful minds, even under parity of circumstances, should be made to assimilate. There must be, as I observed previously, a selection made adapted to individual cases, and this must or ought to be decided on by those especially interested and acquainted with the facts. My limits would also necessarily forbid my entering into such minutiae. I rather desire to lay down a few general principles, and leave them to mothers for application to their own cases and circumstances.

CHAPTER VI.

HINTS TO AMERICAN FEMALES ON THE PHYSICAL CULTURE OF YOUTH.

The human mind prone to rush to extremes, has found it a difficult matter to determine the proper degree of attention desirable and needful to be given severally, to the moral, intellectual, and physical culture of our race. The legislators and rulers of ancient times, considered, health and vigour of body, as of paramount importance. Exercises calculated to ensure the possession of these blessings, were regulated on scientific principles, and to perfect them, was thought a matter deserving the serious and close application of the most philosophic minds.

The labor bestowed in contriving expedients for this purpose, and the assiduity employed in bringing them to perfection, did not lose their reward. The philosophers retreated to the refreshing groves which adorned their cities, and in the healthful and bracing atmosphere, studied and meditated; and there too, they instructed their disciples. Literary application under such circumstances, did not enervate the frame, nor produce those hepatic disorders which are so prevalent among our professional men. While the preservation of the physical energy of their people was considered worthy to engage the attention of the highest ranks of the Greeks and Romans, the necessity for it was by no means so great in a national point of view as with us.

In developing the great internal resources of our country, and in extending her commercial and manufacturing interests on a system commensurate with the exigencies of the present state of society, a vastly greater amount of physical strength is required for the American people in proportion to the population, than was needed by the citizens of Greece from the peculiarity in the circumstances of the latter. The Greeks considered mechanical and agricultural employments as degrading, and consequently to their slaves or villains, all such occupations were almost exclusively consigned. Work-shops and manufactories were indeed possessed by many of the leading men of Athens or Sparta, but to take any practical part in such business, would have been considered highly derogatory to the citizens of either city. "In well regulated states," observed Aristotle, "the lower order of mechanics are not even admitted to the rights of citizens." Another statesman of the classic land went still farther, and proposed that all mechanic labors should be consigned to public slaves.*

Thebes peremptorily forbade any of her mercantile citizens ever to become candidates for the office of chief magistrate; and generally throughout Greece the inferior branches of trade were regarded with scarcely more favor. Agricultural employments were likewise considered as the exclusive occupation of the slaves in many of these states.

May not these facts, in conjunction with the assiduous exertions bestowed by this remarkable people on the physical culture of their citizens, serve to enforce the necessity of our endeavoring, to a considerable extent, in this respect, to imitate their example. If when a far less effec-

* Heeren's Politics of Ancient Greece, chap. x.

tive free population was required, so much thought was bestowed in giving health and elasticity to the corporeal frame, surely it behoves us Americans, whose country needs all the strength her children have to bestow, to allow physical culture a considerable share of their time and attention.

It is obvious to every impartial observer, and medical men are generally ready to concur in the opinion, that effeminacy of habit and debility of constitution are becoming increasingly prevalent in our community. Disease has become, of late years, a far more constant visitor in our nurseries and fire-side circles, while the pulpit, the bar and the counting-house in an equally alarming extent, have been exposed to the same evil.

Lycurgus primarily directed his attention to the promotion of the healthfulness and activity of the Spartan mothers, since he wisely considered the misery that might result to his country, were unhealthy constitutions and defective organic structures, to be entailed on the children of Spartan through the instrumentality of her females. While our judgment at once decides against the means employed by the lawgiver of Lacedæmon, in securing an object which he deemed so essential to her political prosperity—we cannot but commend his wisdom in discerning a necessity for the physical culture of his female fellow citizens. The Scythian mother was accustomed we are told, to plunge her new-born infant in the cooling waters of the river or lake, assigning as a reason for the early ablution, that the frame which was not vigorous enough to survive this trial of its strength, was not meet to be preserved, since its delicacy of structure would be illy qualified to endure the hardships and toils of savage life.

The christian mother of our country desires not, neither may she imitate such an example. Her God has taught her that He only who wakens the soul into existence, may determine the moment when the silver cord shall be loosened, by which the union with the frail mortal nature is to be dissolved. She readily acknowledges it as a subject of gratitude, when a healthy and vigorous body is bestowed on her babe; but when receiving to her embrace a delicate and attenuated form, she dare not pronounce it unworthy of preservation, because the casket in which the soul is lodged is frail and perishable. The humanity infused by divine power into the breasts of christian mothers, has often ensured to them an abundant earthly reward. Wilberforce was raised up by God to be the deliverer of millions of the captive children of Africa; the spiritual and temporal benefactor of multitudes in his native land, and in our own, by his writings and lovely example. Yet he possessed at the time of his birth, such exceeding delicacy of constitution that he was wont to remark in after years, that he was indebted to christianity for the preservation of his animal, no less than of his spiritual life, since no heathen mother would, he thought, have considered his feeble form deserving the care and tenderness needed in its culture.

Robert Hall was ushered into existence with physical powers so diseased, as to afford little hope that his existence could be otherwise than brief and precarious. To his mother's unremitting attentions, under Providence, is the world indebted for having the life of a being preserved who was destined to bless and dignify his species.

But the advantages which have resulted from maternal attention being directed to the careful physical culture of youth, are by no means restricted to the case of individuals

such as we have specified. While the constitutions of delicate children are to be watched over with judicious kindness, those of the naturally vigorous, are, with wisdom and judgment, and in entire dependance upon God, to be trained to a faithful improvement of the advantages which have been granted to them as a birth-right. Health is undoubtedly one of the talents entrusted by the Almighty to his creatures, which like all his other gifts, may be perverted or improved. During infancy and early childhood, we are irresponsible for the use or abuse of this treasure. The mother ordinarily, is the one accountable, since Providence has appointed her the natural guardian of the bodily, no less than of the mental frame. While the soul continues to inhabit its frail earthly tenement, the connection between the two parts of our nature is cemented by strong ties and powerful sympathies. In consequence of this "the corruptible body may press down the soul" to its exceeding detriment, while the latter may re-act on the former with injurious power. On the contrary the healthful condition of the superior part of our nature may be made greatly conducive to the well being of the inferior; while by bringing the latter into subjection to the higher attributes of our nature by the assistance of the Holy Spirit, the moral interests of the soul can be greatly furthered.

The great lesson of self subjugation is essential to be learned by all of our race, and in early life much may be effected by means of those animal propensities generally called appetites, which have been implanted in us for important purposes. It is the wisdom and interest of the mother whose heart yearns for the happiness of the child, early to habituate it to wise discipline of this part of its nature. Do not our female guardians of infancy err ex-

ceedingly on this point in every grade of life, from the highest to the most humble? As a general rule, they should accustom themselves to regard the probabilities which exist, that their youthful charge in subsequent years, may have to encounter the stern realities of life, which are so commonly appointed to our republican citizens in some stage of their journey. Mothers whose circumstances have been through a great part of their lives most adverse, and whose energies have been tasked to the utmost degree, may not unfrequently be heard exclaiming in reference to their children, whose pathway they have no reason to imagine will be less thickly strewn with thorns than their own have been. "Poor things! they will have to suffer hardships enough hereafter! I am determined they shall enjoy what indulgences I have in my power to bestow, while they remain with me!"

Most mistaken reasoning is this, and yet far too common! What shall the christian mother with her bible in her hand, consider it expedient, or the course dictated by affection, to pamper the appetites which must one day necessarily entail suffering on her child; when a fond mother will no longer be watching to encourage it to self exertion, and which must be crucified, ere the soul can be prepared for its heavenly inheritance. Neither may physical uneasiness be all she is laying up in store for it. It sometimes happens that they who in childhood were stimulated until their tastes became morbidly averse to plain and wholesome diet, or to healthful industry, have, when thrown into scenes where their desires were thwarted, and no legitimate mode of gratifying them in prospect, rushed with fearful celerity into the ways of sin, in order to obtain the indulgences which were so much craved, or the release from laborious or honest industry, which was so much desired.

Judicious, systematic, physical culture is needed for our daughters no less than for our sons; it is requisite to promote the health, happiness, and moral excellence of both. Indeed the necessity for it is pressed upon our consideration by every possible means. Those accustomed to regard the scriptures as their rule of life, and the fulfilment of the will of God as their object through life, should feel no hesitation on this point. The duty and obligation of physical culture is based on the word of truth; it was established as a law of our nature, uttered indeed in the language and form of a curse, but designed as a blessing to fallen man, and the structure of our corporeal frame reiterates the same truth. Regular action is necessary to mature the various parts in harmonious and healthful development; and when the delicate and complicated mechanism has become disordered by disease, judicious exercise is often prescribed as a restorative. Throughout our country nervous disorders are becoming more increasingly prevalent, through the various orders of our professional men, and among our female population the evil is no less alarmingly perceptible. "But" says an eminent medical practitioner of our country, "it is by exercise alone that we can hope to expel that cruel enemy of literature and religion, which the sentimentalism of modern days has cherished under the name of weakness of nerves. Weakness of the nerves! Shame on the shortsightedness of our intellectual eye! It is disorder of the stomach and its dependent organs, debility of the muscles, weakness of the brain rather! And this weakness of the nerves is but the voice of these faithful sentinels of nature, uttering their plaintive tones and praying for relief!"

If we glance over the mass of our community, we find them in adult life, by necessity of circumstances, compelled to practice exertion. Through the larger portion of our union, when our females are introduced to the homes over which they are selected to be the guardians, they find their offices far from being sinecures, or their duties such as involve no necessity for active exertion. On the contrary, in innumerable instances arduous employments crowd immediately on the young wives of our country. Too often however, their previous habits have been such as to furnish them with no adequate preparation for their new and untried duties. Mistaken maternal tenderness can inflict evils, which in their consequences may be felt till the close of life. During the season of attendance upon school, our young females are far too much restricted in exercise. Sitting for hours in succession at the desk, the musical instrument, or over the drawing-table, the soft and flexible spinal column receives too often, an unfortunate curvature, or becomes so far enfeebled as to render subsequent exertion toilsome and painful. When the duties of the school room and the hours devoted to accomplishments have passed by, the pale and listless countenances of her daughters plead with the mother for a season of relaxation. Exercise which would invigorate the frame, is discouraged as unlady-like and rude, and the young creatures are allowed to indulge their indisposition to activity, by sitting down to their needles, or to some exciting book. Thus years glide by, until married life with its cares and responsibilities is entered upon, and muscular quietism is at once exchanged for arduous physical exertion, and mental anxiety. The frame, which, by proper discipline, might have been trained by gradually augmenting its burden, so that each day's increase would have been

scarcely perceptible, is bowed down under the suddenly imposed weight for which no adequate preparation had been made, and lassitude and disease soon appear to obscure the prospect of her, who but a short time previous, could see no cloud darkening her domestic horizon, nor imagined that such might afterwards appear.

If this conduct be injudicious and unnatural in the mother, whose principles are only based on the wisdom of the world,¹ what must be thought of it in the case of those, who profess to receive as a part of their belief, the doctrine of God's providential government. The age of miraculous manifestations is now passed by, and God makes known his providential will, not by audible and mysterious intimations from the Shekinah, or by the movements of the fiery pillar, but by circumstances. When daughters are therefore introduced to existence by parents who are compelled to toil and industrious exertion, it should be considered that God's will is thereby clearly made known to those, to whom their culture is committed. They are to be educated in such habits of physical exertion as shall fit them for the station in life in which he has placed them, and not in the inaction, which will incapacitate them for the allotted duties, and abridge essentially, the comfort, happiness, and usefulness of those with whom their future destinies may be connected. Man loves not to behold the countenance of his wife pallid with disease, or to learn from the tone of her voice or the languor of her step that her daily routine of active exertion is gone through from duty, and not with the cheerfulness and alacrity which health alone can impart. Too often in addition to these unwelcome indications of disease, are superadded the irritability and despondency, which are such common accompaniments of a disordered state of the physi-

cal system. If the husband possess not sensibility of character or long tried affection, it too frequently happens that the clouds obscuring the domestic horizon, induce him to look for substitutes of a more attractive but dangerous character abroad, and thus public disorders and national insecurity may become fearfully aggravated by the inattention of mothers to the physical culture of young females.

In respect to their sons, American mothers should be, no less vigilant in doing all which lies in their power to secure their bodily vigor unimpaired. The church of God speaks to them with solemn emphasis on this point. She turns to her vacant pulpits and deserted missionary stations, abandoned too often from necessity, just as the ground was whitening for a rich spiritual harvest, because the ministers of Christ have wanted that vigor of the physical frame which can rarely be found, where early and judicious attention has not been bestowed to diet and exercise! How many such cases might have been spared by the mercy of God, could mothers have summoned resolution to say decisively to the delicate and studious boys on whom their fond affections were garnered,—

“Toil to be strong:—by toil the flaccid nerves
Grow firm, and gain a more compacted tone!”

In the legal, the mercantile, and professional ranks of our country, and the corps of our mechanics and manufacturers, the same caution is needed, and while the relations between body and soul exists, it will continue to remain the same. Our country requires all the exertions of her sons in every rank and station; she can afford to lose none through the false indulgence of the female guardians, to whom she has committed them, saying emphatically, “take these children and nurse them for me

and their God; we require their improvement in bodily strength no less than in intellectual and moral vigor at your hands!"

When a young mother first undertakes the charge of her infant's toilet, if the weather be cold and forbidding, she may from mistaken tenderness and from not being habituated to carry out principles to their results in action, or through mistaken sensibility, inflict a real injury on her child which may affect its well-being through after life. She may commence her duties by a warm and partial ablution, and then from fear of exposing it to cold, continue a practice calculated to enervate the delicate form, whose energies should rather be strengthened by the free application of cool and invigorating water. When early habituated to such treatment, the healthy babe instead of shrinking from the bath, will crow with delight as the rattling of the water strikes upon its ear. I have rarely known one, that would manifest more than momentary resentment at the cooling shower, even under a wintry atmosphere, while rebellion and tearful indignation at having the clothes arranged, will be frequently exhibited.

Experienced physicians have assured me of the importance to the health of children, of early habituating them to have the atmosphere of their sleeping apartments properly ventilated, and of a cool temperature, instead of being heated to undue warmth, or rendered impure by having been occupied through the whole day by a number of individuals. On one occasion I knew a delicate young creature removed by medical order from such a scene, and carried nightly to a chamber which had been unoccupied through the day. The beneficial effects of the removal were soon obvious to the anxious family, and from that period, the hitherto delicate little girl escaped annually

a visitation of a severe and alarming catarrhal affection, which had excited the fears of her family during every preceding winter of her life. Several cases likewise occur to my recollection of individuals in different sections of our union, who, by the advice of eminent medical men, have adopted the practice of daily cold ablutions, and have received great and permanent benefit from the habit. In one instance, a chronic disease of long standing was entirely relieved in this manner.

In carrying into operation a system of physical culture, attention to the diet should claim very great attention. Not only will a simple and moderate regimen be found conducive to the formation of a healthy constitution, but may also be found to exert a sanative power when the bodily organs have become disordered. It is also highly influential in promoting the free exercise of the intellectual powers, which in childhood as well as in riper years, may sometimes be seen too evidently clouded or torpid, under the deleterious effects of an over indulgence of the animal appetites. But there is a still more powerful consideration which should arouse the reflecting portion of our female community to the great importance of forming the youthful mind to early habits of self command over the inferior part of our nature. The natural heart desires indulgence for its animal tastes, and too frequently and too sadly is it humored in this respect, without suspicion being excited, in the mother's heart that she is casting into her darling's bosom, fuel to fan the flame which may one day scathe its purest affections and obscure the light of its otherwise bright example. Oh! that christian females would be faithful on this point to their offspring, their country and their God! How are we frequently constrained to weep and to veil our faces in mortification and

grief, while forced to note the smile of triumph resting on the countenance, or the taunting word escaping from the lips of the worldly man in the private circle, or in the public assembly, at the table of the boarding house, or travelling conveyance, because christians, more especially christian ministers, are seen carefully selecting the most agreeable dish, or the most delicate morceau for their own gratification! Surely the guardians of such during childhood, were grievously in fault; and their errors tell fearfully in the riper years of those, who, with false indulgence, they humored and pampered, when they should have taught wholesome christian moderation. They who thus act, surely forget the apostolic assurance, "I keep under my body and bring it into subjection, lest by any means when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." And in another place, the solemn lesson which is taught by St. Paul, when he assures us by implication, that "sin reigns in the mortal body, when we obey it in the lusts thereof." The hydra which has brought so much discredit on the christian profession, first develops its frightful face in childhood, and that is the fitting period, in which it can be brought into subjection to principle, or nurtured for evil. The infant who sees its parents reserving every rarity for its enjoyment, will soon learn to monopolize for itself, and probably exhibit in its after life a spectacle which ought to be an anomaly — a self-indulgent professor of religion.

Much injury may result to individuals personally, and exceeding annoyance be caused to others, by another evil habit, which is generally referable to mistaken management in mothers. I refer to the practice in which many otherwise conscientious persons indulge, of late rising, which causes much precious time to be lost, and the frame

to become enervated from mere physical indulgence. Sir William Jones was very rigid in self-governance on this point, and enforced the propriety of such habits on others. When the infant frame has been allowed unlimited gratification in this respect, the adult christian will generally find a foe to subdue, whose chains are most difficult to be thrown aside. Even the holy Martyn, we find bewailing his failures and want of christian circumspection on this point, and recording in his diary, his condemnation of himself for the over indulgence of morning slumbers, and his prayerful resolutions to be more vigilant in future against the insidious enemy.

CHAPTER VII.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF AMERICAN WIVES.

When man was first ushered into existence a sinless and happy being, with his moral powers in a healthful condition, and his intellectual faculties fitted for vigorous exertion, the three blessed persons of the Godhead beheld him with complacency as the result of consultation on their part. While beholding him, the Almighty said decisively, "it is not good that man should be alone." A help-meet exactly adapted to the peculiar necessities of man's condition was required, and woman was sent forth to meet the exigency of the occasion. When by disobedience his condition became sadly changed, provision was still made by the continuance of her offices, who had been the leader in transgression, for his social improvement and happiness. While the frame-work of society was undergoing great and radical changes under succeeding dispensations, the Almighty continued to maintain the truth that "it was not good that man should be alone;" the conjugal relation was every where recognized and the specification of its duties formed an important part of the address delivered to the first guilty pair.

What divine wisdom had asserted to be good for men individually, experience proves to have been essential to their prosperity and permanency collectively. Wherever the nuptial contract has been slighted, and the sanctities of the marriage vow trampled upon, vice and misery have

uniformly been found to spread with fearful rapidity—while in proportion as the rights of woman have been acknowledged, and her weakness protected by institutions, according with the designs of God, social happiness, public morals and national prosperity have been secured.

No nation now in existence, has retained so long as England, her civil liberties in a firm and stable condition. Amidst the convulsive heavings that have been agitating the surrounding surface of society, she has retained privileges which have been denied to her neighbors. In no other country during the progress of so many centuries, have the sanctities of married life been so faithfully and honorably maintained. The christian women of England, educated in the free exercise of the liberty which the gospel of love enjoins, have not been desirous to obtrude themselves in the noisy arena of public life, or to mingle in the walks of business. They have rather, wisely sought to cultivate the domestic virtues, and to render the fire-side attractive by those embellishments of mind and manner which throw a charm around every day existence. They have been distinguished for the practical exercise of duty in those minute details which calls forth the best energies of the female character.

France with her unparalleled resources, has on the contrary, been age after age, a tumultuous scene of public and private disorder. Revolution has succeeded revolution, and the streets of her capital and many of her proudest cities, have been crimsoned with the blood of her unhappy children. While many honorable exceptions exist and have existed, the remark is undoubtedly not uncharitable or unwarranted, that the tone of morality prevalent in that great kingdom has been highly unpropitious to the full development of the female character, and while de-

ficient in mothers, fitted to discharge their solemn duties, she has necessarily wanted wives prepared to fulfil their allotted part in the agency entrusted to their sex.

America in the spring time of her national existence, can boast of not a few among her daughters who have proved to their husbands treasures so precious, as to justify the assertion of divine wisdom, that good wives are from the Lord,—his especial gift, bestowed on his servants as a part of the heritage of them that fear his name. Our illustrious Washington was a devoted and happy husband, and his wife was allowed the privilege and honor of retaining to his latest moments the cordial esteem, the uninterrupted confidence, the ardent affection of one of the wisest and purest politicians and statesmen that the world has ever seen. Mrs. John Adams, the partner of Washington's successor in office, was no less distinguished as an affectionate and respected wife, and so truly did "the heart of her husband trust in her" as a wise counsellor, as well as a faithful and devoted friend, that he is recorded as having been ever ready to listen to advice, and to adopt suggestions from her, when he was reluctant to receive them from any other source.

The wives, no less than the mothers of America have each an important office to discharge. Their country's stability among the nations depends mainly on the moral virtues of her citizens; and yet many among them at the present time are immersed in the turmoil of worldly business, or engaged in the strife of politics, so dangerous to those whose principles are not firmly fixed, on the only solid basis. While the law of God commands women unhesitatingly to practice dutiful subinission to their own husbands, however undeserving, "as unto the Lord," when higher interests are not involved, it gives them the

unspeakably comforting assurance, that "even when allied to those who are unworthy, these may without the word be won by the conversation of their wives; while they behold their chaste conversation coupled with fear."

Surely if God has honored women by entrusting the infant soul to her in its forming state, no less has he done so, by holding out to her the precious assurance, that he can dignify her by making her instrumental in winning the lost and the erring to the paths of holiness. Experience verifies the promise held out for her encouragement under the darkest of all situations. Many individuals once sunk in the depth of sin, have been, by the blessing of God on the prayers, exertions and example of affectionate and faithful wives, roused to a sense of their ruined condition, and led to seek an interest in the God who had been a husband to the souls of their wives in their loneliness and desertion. It is scarcely possible to picture deeper degradation for a fellow being, who in early life had enjoyed the advantages of instruction from a pious and affectionate mother, than that to which the Rev. John Newton was subjected during his residence on the African Slave Coast. With a soul benumbed, and an intellect paralyzed, the evil passions of his fallen nature usurped supreme control, and to human eye, no hope could have been reasonably entertained, that the youth, who seemed but one grade in advance of the abject and loathsome victims of idolatry and sensuality, by whom he was kept in rigid bondage, could ever rise to the common level of humanity, still less, should ever become a model of what is lovely and of good report among men, adorning pre-eminently the doctrine of God his Saviour, and the instrument in his Almighty hand of effecting the moral regeneration of a vast number of his fellow creatures.

But while sunk in such an abyss of misery and degradation, that even the precepts and instructions of his excellent mother seemed to have lost their power to touch his obdurate heart, one *spot* still retained its vitality. He lost not his affection for her, who had first awakened the feeling of love in his boyish heart, and when no other earthly object had power to awaken emotion, her image could arouse his dormant sensibilities, and as he was wont to remark in after life, she was the means under God, of saving him from spiritual and temporal destruction.

There is another and most interesting class of our fellow creatures who may be roused from their state of moral insensibility, ere the opportunity of escape has been forever lost, by the instrumentality of faithful and judiciously pious wives. I allude to those, who highly gifted in talents and acquirements, have learned to enthrone intellect in idolatrous regard, and worship the creature with such sedulous assiduity, that the claims of the Creator are made to yield before it. In the chapter devoted to the intellectual culture of youth the danger of allowing the youthful imagination unlicensed scope, has been pointed out. May I be permitted to direct the attention of the wives, more especially the youthful wives of our country, at this time to the evils that may assail their husbands from the same quarter? Never was the peril greater than at the present moment, when fiction has been rendered in the hands of the talented and accomplished, so attractive as frequently to engross the attention, and pervert the habits of the most intellectual. Many I know will smile at my fears on this point, and assert that to individuals such as I have specified, the habit of reading works of imagination can be productive of no injury. As a confirmation of my own opinion, I will cite a remarkable case which may not only serve as

a proof of the fatal consequences that will result from such a practice, but may also afford comfort and encouragement to some young and affectionate wife who may have found cause for disquietude from her husband's devotion to such pursuits.

Some years since there graduated at the University of Cambridge, Eng., with distinguished honor, a young man of the name of Cornelius Neale, the son of a gentleman well known in London, for piety and benevolence, and for great enterprise as a manufacturer. His wife was an admirable woman, and an excellent christian, the friend and correspondent of Fletcher, of Madely, Newton, and Cecil. The young man had been educated with great care, both at home and at school, and during his collegiate course, maintained a high reputation for moral, no less than for intellectual excellence. The scriptures were familiar to him from infancy, and frequently and deeply, had he been impressed on religious subjects. If unrestrained indulgence in works of imagination, could ever have been permitted to any young man with impunity, the individual now under consideration might be supposed to have furnished such an exception. Experience however proved in his case, that none can come unscathed through such a trial. Several years of his short life, after graduating, were passed in a species of intellectual idolatry of Shakespeare, and other heroes of literature, until under the exciting influence of works of imagination, he lost his relish for the Word of God, and laid aside the practice of secret devotion. His outward conduct meanwhile, continued so irreproachable, that few even of his dearest friends were aware of the fire that was consuming him internally. He left Cambridge loaded with the honors of the University, being Senior Wrangler, First Smith's Prize man, and Second Medal-

list in 1812, and in the following year he was elected Fellow of St. John's College. In 1814, he married the accomplished daughter of the late Dr. John Mason Good. This lady was eminently qualified to adorn domestic life and render it attractive. She became the mother of a lovely boy, on whom her husband concentrated his ardent affections, so that his fair image soon rivalled in his father's heart, the intellectual idols of former days. A few juvenile pupils had been placed under the care of Mr. Neale previous to his marriage, and after the birth of her own child, as the responsibilities of the maternal relation opened before her, his wife learned to feel with additional poignancy, her husband's inattention to their spiritual interests, which was strikingly contrasted with his diligence in attending to their intellectual improvement. She became increasingly alarmed, when to indifference in private and public religious duty, she found him uniting efforts to draw her mind aside from that trust in the providential government of God which had been to her, a source of comfort and enjoyment. She gently expostulated, but in return, for the first time in her married life, elicited an angry reply.

In this state of mind, Mr. Neale felt himself forlorn and destitute, in despite of his high intellectual endowments and great acquirements, and in a vain attempt to fill the aching void he found within, he turned with increased and inordinate avidity to works of fiction, and novels and plays were devoured by him incessantly. His means having become ample, he was released from the cares of tuition, but his increased leisure, his talents and money, were employed only in gratifying his own inclinations.

With the increase of the passion for exciting mental stimulants, his intellectual tastes deteriorated, and in pro-

portion to his declension in moral sensibility, the relish for scientific and classical literature abated. Neither did he feel any further anxiety to employ his fine talents in a way, useful to his fellow creatures, "and the noble ingenuous pursuit after the true and the beautiful in the works of God, gave way to the sickly appetite for selfish excitement."

Under her accumulated trials, Mrs. Neale assures us in the interesting memoir she has given of her beloved husband, "*I began a little more to understand the meaning of the word prayer.*" Her soul was poured forth in agony. God was, however, she tells us, "on the point of manifesting his mercy when I was beginning to despair." The detail of the deep and permanent change wrought in the mind of Mr. Neale, as furnished by his wife, is written in a style so touching and simple, that I cannot forbear quoting it for the practical benefit of those, who, under a similarity of trial, may not have her narrative before them, from which to derive encouragement as well as instruction.

The very day succeeding the conversation alluded to, she thus writes, "after breakfast my husband was seized with a slight hemorrhage, so slight that but for the evident terror I saw it produce in his mind, I should not have heeded it. The medical man who came, confirmed me in this opinion, and said it was of no consequence, and ordered quiet and some mild remedies. Being in ill health at the time, by my husband's wish, I prepared to take a short ride, but was grieved on just going away, to be recalled, to wait till the servant should first get for him, from the circulating library, the last new novel of Sir Walter Scott's; or if this was not to be had, some others. The man returned with two or three, and I went out. I did not go farther than the end of a short street, before I regretted having been

induced to leave home; and returned to the house more hastily than I had quitted it, after an absence not exceeding one short quarter of an hour. On entering the room, unexpectedly, words cannot express the surprise that seized me, at the change so strikingly depicted in my husband's countenance, from fear and irritation, to marked sorrow, but comparative placidity, and as I thought, mental prayer. The first object which drew my notice, and against which I had nearly stumbled, as it lay at the entrance of the door of a large drawing-room opposite to that where my husband lay on the sofa—was the very novel I had left him reading, lying half open, as if it had been thrown there with considerable force, and by some one in great agitation. . . . It appears that fearing his sickness to be of the same nature, and perhaps likely to have the same issue with that of his brother, he determined to put away thought, and endeavored with this view, to get interested in the story before him; he read the beginning, but in vain; turned over many successive pages, still in vain; and found himself looking at the end blank leaf; when suddenly a strong impression came across his mind, not indeed in the same way, but as forcibly as if a voice were speaking to him, "there is mercy yet!" reiterating the expression so that he could as it were, see or hear nothing else. With unutterable indignation against himself for thus trifling, and unspeakable joy to feel persuaded of the truth of the suggestion, and that it was indeed sent in mercy, he threw with violence, the book as far from him as possible, and could only with thankfulness determine to accept the offered mercy; and from this moment *to, and through* his dying hour, no doubt that he was one whom this mercy had accepted, ever really, *or at all abidingly*, disturbed his mind."

Mrs. Neale watched her beloved husband for several succeeding days with intense anxiety, but—an anxiety oh! how different from that, with which she had formerly regarded him. "I saw" she says "there was a work going on within the heart, too deep for me to venture to direct." She accordingly sent for an experienced minister of Christ, whose preaching she had once persuaded him to attend, in the hope of his receiving benefit. Then, he returned chafed and irritated at the doctrines of the gospel, and forbade his wife ever attempting to lead him again to the same church. Now, the humbled and condemned sinner, earnestly desired to behold the man of God, and to have his inmost soul probed by him thoroughly. It pleased God to raise Mr. Neale from the bed of sickness, and to prolong his valuable life for three years, during which time his wife assures us, there "seemed an almost daily growth in my dear husband's christain character." Mourning deeply over his past aberrations, he now sought diligently to improve his talents and time to the glory of God and the good of his fellow beings, and after diligent preparation, received ordination in the Established Church of England, and while in the assiduous discharge of parochial and ministerial duty, "it pleased God to close his earthly labors." Death, under former circumstances, while walking amidst the vain illusions of imaginative excitement, had been full of terror to him; but when armed in the panoply of the christian, he contemplated it without alarm. As he was about expiring, he breathed into the ear of his fond wife these thrilling words, "the fear of death is quite taken away," and then fell asleep in Jesus, in his thirty-fourth year.

The history of Mr. Neale has been given more at length than may at first seem advisable, but our Lord by his wise

example, taught us how much of important truth may be conveyed to us in a narrative. We see principles carried out into practice both for warning and instruction, and by attentively contemplating the retrograde course of one mind in its descent from the eminence to which it had attained, and its progressive ascent to a far higher position in the scale of moral and intellectual being, we may conceive, derive more benefit than from many abstract discussions of religious truth. Mrs. Neale's conduct may furnish the wives of America placed under equally painful circumstances, with many invaluable hints for their own improvement. The artillery she employed, was such only as the word of God directs its female readers to call into requisition. Prayer and the study of the scriptures formed the source of consolation; but while advanced far higher in the knowledge of divine truth than her husband, she sought to win him by gentle exhortation, not by direct reproof. While acting as the christian guide, she never ceased to remember she was the wife likewise; and as such bound to reverence her husband. These are important truths which pious wives sometimes lose sight of in the earnestness of their zeal, and in doing so, their sincere and fervent desires are too often defeated, while they marvel that success attends not their efforts.

The history of the celebrated Lavater places before us another key by which to secure the possession of domestic happiness when assailed by a different but not less fatal enemy. This gentleman was by nature of a hasty and irritable temperament, and excited to anger on the slightest provocation. His amiable wife while she loved and respected him, could not disguise from herself this fact. She perceived it, and attempted not to persuade her husband that the offence was light or trifling, but by her gentle expostulations and winning tenderness she sought with chris-

tian meekness to lead him to pray for strength to resist his besetting sin, and when overcome by one temptation, she solaced him with the hope that still further struggles might be rendered more effectual. On one occasion he was on the point of yielding to angry expressions under some sudden provocation, when his eye encountered that of his wife fixed on him, not with the severity of a censor, but with a "tranquil gentle, smiling look," which he observes "restrained my anger." Oh! would that the "soft answer which turned away wrath," might be more continually heard from the lips of American wives. Too often may sharp tones and peevish complaints be heard in the secret recesses of our dwellings, provoking instead of pacifying, adding bitterness to disappointment, and poignancy to sorrows, already heavy. The wife who habitually allows herself to be a gloomy, discontented, and peevish companion, grievously fails in her duty, since it is not a slight evidence of female piety when its possessor habitually endeavors to render that home attractive, over which she has been appointed mistress, to him, who selected her from all the rest of her sex, in the expectation that she would commend his choice by proving herself willing to make him happy, as well as *capable* of doing so. Nothing will more effectually serve to prevent public and morbid excitement and dissolute excess, than our females studiously exerting themselves by vigilance to maintain their tempers cheerful and happy, their affections in proper discipline, and their faculties in sound and healthful exercise. Were the husbands and fathers of our country, whether occupying higher or more humble stations in society, on their return home in the intervals of occupation, or after the labors of a long day, habitually to find their wives disposed to please and to be pleased, ready to contribute to

the measure of their several abilities to relieve the fireside from dulness and insipidity, or from the still greater evil of unholy tempers and unlovely manners, then might we more reasonably hope that the reign of peace, quietness and order, both public and private, might, by the blessing of God, be long maintained within our borders. Many good women feel no small complacency in the consciousness that they are obeying the apostolic injunction by being "keepers at home," when alas! while conforming to this precept of the moral law from inclination, they forget that by a no less positive command, they are required to show forth in their practice "whatsoever things are lovely and of good report," and thus to win their husbands to the love and practice of domestic and religious duty.

The professional, mechanical or agricultural employments of the husband, will, to a considerable extent, affect the details of a wife's duty, and it would be incompatible with the design or the limits of this work to attempt their specification. If general principles of action be accurately and soundly established, it will be comparatively easy for a woman to determine their application in the discharge of her appropriate duties. She who is united to the practical agriculturalist or laboring man, should consider it her especial duty to inform herself as to the details that lie within her province. If her husband's circumstances permit assistance to be obtained in her department, she will be a wise overseer, a judicious directress, ruling with diligence and skill, but with wisdom and christian consideration likewise. If providentially appointed to a more laborious sphere, she will be equally conscientious. The dairy, the kitchen, the neat parlor and the wardrobes of her husband and children, as well as her own, should each and all attest the watchful care and management of her,

who has been taught to consider no action too trifling to be performed "heartily as unto the Lord."

The laborious lives of our medical practitioners can be greatly soothed, and their usefulness extended by judicious conduct on the part of their wives. The physical well-being of the community is deeply involved in a profession, to whose skill the human frame when disordered by disease, or marred by providential misfortunes, is committed from infancy to hoary age. The medical adviser of each family becomes more intimately associated with their joys and sorrows, than any other individual, and to his honor, is involuntarily or freely committed oftentimes, the most secret and important interests of the families in whom he is a practitioner. Sometimes the husband having been habituated to treat the partner of his cares with unreserved confidence in respect to his own concerns, forgets in the intimacy of their converse, that equal privileges should not be granted to her when another's rights are involved, and in a moment of weakness, or perhaps of forgetfulness, entrusts to her information, which was never designed or expected to be communicated by him. The wife from thoughtlessness or a more questionable feeling, repeats the tale told to her, and thus the matter goes abroad into society, the spark kindling into a flame, which burns more fiercely as it advances, spreading dissension, and estranging hearts in its progress which might, had it not been for it, continued to maintain a kindly intercourse. Still more grievously does the wife of the physician depart from duty when she surreptitiously obtains information entrusted to his keeping, and employs it for the furtherance of her own uncharitable purposes.

The happiness and peace of society may be likewise greatly promoted or disturbed by the females who are

placed in the same close relation to gentlemen of the legal profession. It not unfrequently happens that those whose friendship has stood the test of time, and whose sympathies have been long harmoniously blended by similarity of tastes and pursuits, find themselves ranged on opposite sides in prosecution of the claims of their respective clients in the same law suit; and thus they, who in the intercourse of daily life feel and act as friends, may by the duties of their respective stations be placed in battle array on the professional arena, and in the excitement of the moment, may recriminate severely as opposing counsel, while as men, they feel most kindly towards each other. So may it also happen in political life. Most desirable is it on these accounts, that in the privacy of the domestic circle the spirits chafed and envenomed perhaps by collision, with others in public, may be soothed and mollified by the affectionate and judicious conduct of wives and other female relatives. Too frequently, however, it happens that she who should act as a ministering spirit, by seeking to extract the poisoned shaft, serves to implant it the more deeply and fatally in the bosom, by allowing her feelings to magnify the offence, and to cherish it in her own recollection and that of her husband.

There is a large and increasing class of our female citizens, on whom most weighty responsibilities are devolved in respect to the highest interests of our country, though by political economists their claims to attention have been too generally overlooked. I allude to the wives of American clergymen. The ministers of Christ are his accredited representatives; the ambassadors solemnly deputed by him to fill the most important official stations in this world. If a prudent and truly good wife be a blessing to man in every

profession, most especially will she deserve to be so regarded, who shall in faith, humility, and love, devote her time and energies in co-operating with her partner in his ministerial duties, by seeking to further his plans; to do him honor before his people by her own conduct, and that of her family; to solace him under his often severe trials; and to encourage under perplexities. When like Moses, his hands are becoming saint, and his strength is ready to fail in the contest he is called on to wage with the hosts of his Lord's enemies, woman can by her pious prayers, counsel, and cheering exhortations, sustain the drooping heart and strengthen the feeble hand. "How few clergymen select such women as suit their high and holy character," remarked the excellent Cecil, who had himself been most happy in his choice. "A Minister," he continues, "is like a man who has undertaken to traverse the world. He has not only fair and pleasant ground to travel over, but he must encounter deserts and mountains and marshes. The traveller wants a firm and steady stay. His wife should be above all things, a woman of faith and prayer—a woman too, of a sound mind and tender heart—she should be his unsailing resource, so far as he is to seek this in the creature. Blessed is she who is thus qualified and thus lives! . . . In prosecuting his work with a right spirit, the Minister keeps in motion a vast machine; and such are the incalculable consequences of his wife's character to him, that if she assist him not in urging forward the machine, she will hang as a dead weight upon its wheels." Most essentially can a clergyman's wife enlarge his power of doing good, by her prudence and domestic management, as well as by her piety. I have known gentlemen filling the holy office, who were yet sadly cramped and interested with in their

labors, if not, I fear, unfitted at times for their discharge, from this circumstance; that by the inefficiency of those whom they had selected as help-meets, an extra share of exertion, and that of a most trying kind, was devolved upon them. They were perpetually harassed by domestic arrangements entirely without their province. The wives of our ministers should feel their obligations on this point. They should, as far as practicable, relieve their husbands from the necessity of attending to business transactions connected with their family affairs, that so their precious time may be garnered up for their peculiar duties, and their spirits preserved from collision with people and scenes, calculated to disturb the equanimity of spirit, which the ambassador of Christ should studiously seek to preserve. They should exhibit consistency in all their family arrangements. Their own dress and that of their daughters, should evince, that christian moderation influences them in this important point, and they should seek to order their families in such a manner that they may exemplify in the eyes of others, the religion which their husbands inculcate in their pulpits.

While the moral and intellectual interests of a husband should ever have paramount claim on the consideration of a wife, let it not be forgotten that the necessities and feelings of his physical nature demand a just share of attention. Some worthy and pious females err on this point, and do not sufficiently consult their husbands constitutional tastes and prejudices. Almost all men like to see their dwellings, be they ever so humble, kept tidily and tastefully, their tables laid out neatly and their provisions prepared in such a manner as to show attention has been given to their comfort, and that their desires have been

consulted. It is not by any means, always a proof of a sensual disposition that a man desires his viands to be seasoned so as to render them palatable and even attractive. A man feels as if his dignity and the credit of his wife were involved in the domestic arrangements of his family, and it is reasonable and just that proper deference should be yielded to him on such points. I cannot but think from my own observation, that the happiness of domestic life is essentially dependent on our wives and daughters exerting themselves as far as possible, in dependence on divine strength, to render their homes hallowed and attractive in the eyes of their husbands and fathers, so that political excitements and intoxicating physical stimulants may not be resorted to to supply substitutes for blighted joys, or to heal the wounds which by domestic unkindness, have been inflicted.

American wives should learn to consider themselves under as great an obligation to preserve their persons pleasing in the eyes of their husbands, as they once did in those of their lovers, before the marriage vow was irreversibly sealed; such inattention is rarely manifested, but it would in reality be far more excusable, since the gentleman has till then, the *power* to recede from his engagement if the object of his choice proves herself heartless and inconsiderate of his happiness. But when indissolubly united, until death shall sever them, neglect and indifference on the part of either, is far more serious an offence, for each has solemnly vowed before God and man, to love, honor and cherish the other to the latest period of existence.

The adornment of "a meek and quiet spirit," is that which should by no means be dispensed with by any woman.

There are, however, inferior but most fundamental obligations resting on them as wives; they are bound by principle, and most certainly by interest, so to form their personal habits and domestic arrangements, as to enable those who have vowed to love, cherish, and honor them, to find pleasure in the performance of duty.

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CHAPTER VIII.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF WOMEN AS DAUGHTERS, SISTERS, ETC.

One of the most beautiful features in the christian system, is the freeness with which its most precious blessings are tendered to all of the human race. No individual by inherent right, can purchase a title to their possession, or can presume to silence the claims of another, however feeble, ignorant, or previously degraded. Each and all must appear "without money, and without price" in their hands, and be content to receive the proffered gift of salvation, as of grace alone.

But while meritorious claims are excluded, universal obligation is imposed on all of the servants of God, of what age soever, and of both sexes, to be contributing according to their several abilities, as members of the christian host, in carrying on the wise and providential purposes of God.

The mothers and wives of our country are not singled out from their sex, as those alone, on whom the responsibilities of moral agents are imposed. The daughters and the sisters of our country; those who are yet in the bloom of life, and they who have busleted its storms for years, and are left in its decline, apparently the most helpless and friendless of creation; all are required to come "to the help of the Lord against the mighty."

The daughters of our land can do much if faithful, to promote the moral, intellectual, and physical well-being of their parents. Under the pressure of domestic cares, with which the maternal heads of families are encumbered in this country, a more than ordinary diligence is required on the part of their female offspring. The mother's toils are to be shared by them so far as possible, that her moral agency may be permitted free scope. When the incessant demands made upon her time and strength, threaten to interfere with her husband's claims, or with those of society, then should her elder daughters gladly present themselves as her deputies, ready to co-operate in her work, and to further the interests of the common objects of solicitude. They are bound by imperative obligations, to reciprocate the kind offices bestowed on them, during the helplessness of infancy and early childhood. For them, her youthful energies were expended, and surely it should be their delight, no less than it is their duty, to be her willing co-adjutors, when the lassitude of enfeebled health incapacitates her from an efficient discharge of her arduous responsibilities. The interest with which she was once wont to embellish home, in order to heighten its attractions in the eyes of her husband, may have been lessened by the anxieties of later years, and on detecting the omission which men are so ready to note, and too often to resent, he may be in danger of seeking some substitute abroad in a dangerous atmosphere. At such a crisis, how happily and successfully may young females step in, and by the zeal which affection imparts and stimulates, may revive *home sympathies*, in the bosom that is becoming morbidly callous to them.

It may be, that husband and wife, have discovered when too late, that they have been mated, but not matched.

With characters diametrically opposed in taste and sentiment, they may present a spectacle of the most melancholy kind. Under such circumstances, a pious, affectionate, dutiful, intelligent, and discreet daughter can become eminently serviceable as a moral agent. Inheriting probably distinctive traits of character from both parents, she will be enabled to sympathise with each on certain points, and with the ingenuity of female tenderness, she can become all things to either, in order to unite them once more in sweet harmony. Those, whose affections have been in a degree estranged, can thus be made to feel that while one loving being remains, towards whom their hearts instinctively turn, there is still a powerful remaining tie, blending their destinies together.

The fathers of our country, no less than their partners, have toils and mental anxieties, which might be far more effectively lightened by their daughters, than is generally found to be the case. A gentleman who filled one of the highest stations under the government of our country, the emoluments of whose office, being as is often the case, disproportioned to the expenditure of a large family in an expensive city, had for years, the post of private secretary filled for him with exemplary diligence and efficiency, by a young and admired daughter, who was enabled in this manner, to relieve her beloved parent from the expense of a clerk's salary.

Another young lady, I once saw referred to by her father, who was a legal practitioner, for some information on a law case, while conversing with a brother member of the bar. To the evident surprise of the latter, she cited the authority desired by her parent, though her modest air and the blush which crimsoned her cheek as she spoke, showed she was influenced by no love of display. I learned on

subsequent enquiry, that she had been her father's diligent assistant in writing volumes of law reports, which he from time to time, had been sending to the press.

How useful might the daughters of our mercantile men of every grade become, would they more generally apply themselves systematically to the study of book-keeping, so that their fathers might feel justified in entrusting to them this responsible business, instead of being obliged to employ a stranger's hand in seasons of necessary absence from home, or when illness oppressed them. To be perplexed by the necessity of attending to accounts at such moments, operates to a man's physical and moral injury. I am happy to say, that such cases are to be met with not unfrequently in our country, and would that they abounded more! When disease attacks our mercantile men and others of different professions, happy would it be for them, in every respect, could they but more generally feel, that in their efficient and dutiful children, they had substitutes so far qualified to undertake their business, as to relieve their minds from the pressure of anxiety. Thus not being oppressed with the cares of this world, they might find leisure and calmness to consider their everlasting interests. When death comes with its solemn realities, and the hour of separation is felt to be near, it cannot but soothe the dying bed of the pious professional man, to know that he leaves behind an intelligent and well-instructed daughter, who is competent to overlook his affairs, and if necessary and expedient, to carry on her father's business for the maintenance of his helpless little ones.

I have had the pleasure on more than one occasion, to know young ladies, who, when their parents had been reduced by unexpected reverses of fortune, from affluence to great pecuniary depression, came forward promptly and

nobly to undertake the task of their support. A kind providence cast his approving smile upon these exemplary young females, and they were enabled by their industry and exertions, to secure for the declining years of the authors of their being, homes sweetened by filial affection.

An intelligent christian lady of my acquaintance, has furnished me with an interesting account of the daughter of a clergyman of the Church of England, who, as well as his father, was highly esteemed by the American public for his valuable religious writings, as well for his exemplary life. This young lady, when just entering into womanhood, was for many weeks, during her father's absence in another part of England, placed in very difficult and trying circumstances. He officiated at the time in two, if not in three churches, in different periods of the day, which during his absence were to be provided for by no one clergyman regularly. She was the repository of her father's cares, the maintainer of his dignity; and so efficiently did she attend to providing for each pulpit, by personal enquiry and personal application to the neighboring clerical friends of her parent, that on each Sabbath of his absence his people found a minister prepared to preach the word of God to them.

It not unfrequently happens that parents, more especially fathers, may be found treading the broad way that leads to eternal death, while their youthful daughters have entered on the strait and narrow one, which is to terminate in eternal life. Most responsible do the stations of the latter become under such circumstances! Blessed may their ministrations be to their parents! Classic story commemorates the praises of her, who daily visited the dungeon of her father, to nourish his physical frame with the genial current that

flowed from her own bosom, by which means life was prolonged until his liberation was finally effected. Still more affecting and impressive is the spectacle presented, when the christian daughter, yearning with love for the souls of her parents, daily pours forth her prayers and tears for the conversion of the authors of her being, and on her knees, in the fervency of her daily petitions for them, declares her willingness, her readiness *to die*, if so be, that her death may, by God's blessing, become the means of their introduction to spiritual life. God has not unfrequently seen fit to effect what has been so earnestly desired, by this very means. He has smitten the object of parental idolatry, that he might draw the heart estranged from him, back to his service; or in order to teach those till then, ignorant of the realities of religion, forcibly to know its life-giving power, by seeing it exemplified in the example of a dying child.

The excellent Wilberforce on one occasion was an eye witness to such a scene, and his remarks in respect to it, in a letter to a friend are beautiful and touching. "How striking," he observes, "to see a tender spirited young woman, looking the last great enemy in the face, with as much calm resolution as was ever shown by any military hero in the field,—with far more indeed; for surely far more is required, where all around tends to soften the mind, and give reason its full unruffled exercise, than when the drums, trumpets, artillery, and the bustle of war have excited all the passions. She (the young cousin he was visiting) has long been her mother's consolation and earthly support, but these services can be rendered by other friends, or even by dependants. There are still higher services which so much loved an object alone can render; weaning from this world, and exercising faith, patience,

child-like confidence and love. The effects of these will endure forever; and the day will, I doubt not, arrive, when the mother shall see that her daughter was the selected and honored instrument of obtaining for her the most excellent of blessings."*

A most affecting example of filial solicitude for the eternal interests of a beloved parent, is presented in the short memoir of the lovely and accomplished Clementine Cuvier, the daughter of Baron Cuvier. A number of young French ladies of rank, had agreed to devote one hour in the week to prayer, for the spiritual conversion of their relatives. Clementine was one of them, and faithfully did this admirable young lady observe the appointment. "One night," says her memorialist, "when rapidly sinking under the power of disease, she was heard to say with emphasis, '*my father, my father.*' The bystanders hearing the expression, sent for the Baron, who came immediately to the bed-side of his dying child. She intimated that it was not her design to have had him sent for, and seemed somewhat discomposed at his appearance. Her friends were at a loss to account for her conduct, till one, who was in the secret of her closet engagement, on looking at the clock, perceived it was the hour appointed for her intercession with God for the salvation of her father. The cry of '*My father, my father,*' was in fact the audible expression of her wrestling with God for the conversion of the Baron; her feelings had become too strong to be confined to silent mental prayer, and burst forth in supplication, with strong crying and tears. Nothing could make her forget the hour consecrated to her beloved father; not even her own great sufferings and approaching

* Wilberforce's Life. American edition, p. 419.

dissolution. Strong in death, the sacred feelings of a pious child, lived and triumphed in her breast." This interesting young lady may well serve as an example of filial duty. Exemplary in her own conduct, and intelligent in her perceptions of christian truth and its requirements, she could not disguise from herself the painful fact, that the father so loved and admired by herself, and so distinguished for scientific and political knowledge among his fellow creatures, was yet ignorant of the Saviour whom she loved most tenderly. But Clementine never merged the humility of the child in the authority of the christian teacher. She taught by her lovely example; she wrestled importunately for him she loved, in prayer; but she adopted not the unnatural course practised by some zealous and injudicious young christians, who irritate by their reproofs and rouse parental pride, even by the tacit assumption of superiority.

Prayer is the great engine that must be wielded by the filial hand; example must be the mode in which the precepts to be inculcated are to be embodied. Perseverance in both, will most generally be crowned with God's blessing, in the accomplishment of the desired object. How frequently this has been the result, the records of the great day can alone determine!

A sister's office, especially if she be an elder sister, is one likewise of great responsibility, for the faithful discharge of which her country lays on her important claims. The eminent statuary, or painter, retains in his gallery some of the finest specimens of his art; and by so doing, gives the most substantial proof of his genius and professional abilities. May not the mother avail herself of somewhat the same privilege, though in a different spirit. She should feel herself happy, when she can point to the lovely

example of her senior daughters, as models to the younger, who by the grace of God, may be taught in conformity to apostolic precept, to be assimilated to what is lovely and excellent, by the conduct of others.

An elder sister of piety, amiability and intelligence, can scarcely fail to exert a most benign influence over her brothers and sisters. There will be an unreserve in the intercourse of such, which will throw their hearts more effectually open to each other, than is ordinarily possible under other circumstances. Every by-gone association will be more completely blended, and habits will naturally be more uniform in the cases of individuals who have been exposed to the same influences; brought up in the same scenes, and the daily current of whose thoughts and feelings, have been flowing on simultaneously as they have walked in close companionship, from the earliest manifestations of thought or feeling.

In the memoir of our interesting country-woman, the late Mrs. Sarah L. Smith, the wife of the Rev. Eli Smith, American Missionary in Syria, we have a beautiful example of a sister's influence, sanctified to the everlasting good of a beloved relative. Mrs. Smith had a younger brother most especially dear to her, for whose welfare her heart was continually directing its aspirations to God. Intelligent, moral, and amiable, like the young ruler who commended himself to the affections of our Lord, young Huntington lacked one thing, which his loving and pious sister, considered as above all others, desirable. She endeared herself to his heart, by her tenderness and lovely deportment; she commanded his reverence by her high intellectual and moral endowments; and the hold thus obtained on his feelings, she improved by judicious christian counsel. She was importunate and persevering in prayer for his

conversion, and before she left her home, to share a missionary's cares and privileges in a far distant land, she was permitted to see of the travail of her soul. The brother whom she loved so ardently, became a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of his kingdom.

With great feeling does the holy Martyn record his obligations to the affectionate counsel of a christian sister, who in despite of discouragement, persevered in her meek endeavors to win her beloved brother to the love of the Saviour, whom he so long rejected, but for whom, he finally suffered a species of martyrdom.

The young females of our country, placed in the same relation, should recollect that they too, may be made the instruments of a brother's moral regeneration. They should seek to sympathise in the intellectual pursuits and professional labors of those who are allied to them by this strong and enduring tie, which under proper improvement, will only become the more enduring, with the lapse of time. Young men love to find their sisters able to appreciate their tastes, and ready to listen to their opinions. Young and active minds will often set forth new views, and sometimes advance them, for the pleasure of proving to themselves, how well they can sustain an argument, and with what logical accuracy, they can deduce opinions from given premises. Sisters should exercise patience, and not endeavor uniformly to convince them of the fallacy of opinions, in which vital interests are not involved. Where principle is in danger of being compromised, we cannot be too vigilant, but where the reasoning powers are put in play, as an invigorating exercise, we should manifest forbearance. Our young females should also evince affectionate solicitude in regard to the physical comforts of their brothers, and show by attention to their

wardrobes, and by making exertions to render the fire-side agreeable to them, that their feelings are tenderly considered, without being allowed to monopolize all a sister's energies, or to engross her whole time. I have frequently heard a gentleman of my acquaintance, who was richly endowed by nature, and had made great intellectual acquirements, exclaim—"Alas! the better half of my nature has not been cultivated! I never enjoyed the privilege of having an affectionate mother or sister to call forth its higher feelings!"

A sister will of course not restrict the exercise of the special affections growing out of this relation, to her brothers. She has high and holy duties to discharge to her younger sisters, whom she may train by precept and example, to the practice of the peculiar duties of the female sex. In our own country, we frequently hear parents lamenting their inability to give their children those advantages of education which their wishes would dictate. But if the elder daughter of each family was but properly disciplined, she might become the governess to the junior members of the domestic circle, to her own benefit as well as theirs. And as on this class of young females, often devolves in our country, a large part of the task, of forming the moral, intellectual and physical habits of their younger brothers and sisters, it is of essential consequence to their families and to the community at large, that they should be roused to a vivid consciousness of their responsibilities.*

* The importance in a national point of view of encouraging the practice of domestic education which I have suggested, is enforced by the following statement, taken from the interesting tour of Dr. Henderson in Iceland. "On enquiring" he writes "into the state of mental cultivation in Iceland, we are struck with the universal diffusion

"I should have indulged myself in attending more to accomplishments," said a young lady on one occasion, "but being the eldest daughter of a large family I had to prepare myself, to be the preceptress of my little brothers and sisters, and the assistant of my parents." Would that such judicious consideration was more universally exhibited under similar circumstances. I am happy however to be able to say from personal observation, that many young females, have discharged, and others are still discharging, quietly, unostentatiously, and most happily their sisterly duties among us; the fruit of their exertions is manifested in the orderly habits and domestic virtues of those households over whom they have been deputed to preside, while in the matured excellence of their own characters, and in the warm and respectful affection which they have elicited from those blessed by their kind offices, they have reaped, and are still reaping a rich earthly reward.

Among the most striking changes, which christianity has effected in society, is the dignity which she has conferred on the members of our sex, who by the providence of God, continue through life, freed from the responsibilities, duties and peculiar enjoyments of the conjugal and maternal

of the general principles of knowledge among its inhabitants. Though there be only *one school* in Iceland, and that solitary one is designed exclusively for the education of such as are afterwards to fill offices in church or state; yet it is exceedingly rare to meet with a boy or girl, who has attained the age of 9 or 10 years, that cannot read and write with ease. Domestic education is most rigidly attended to; and I scarcely ever recollect entering a hut, where I did not find some individual or other, capable of entering into conversation with me on topics which would be reckoned altogether above the understandings of people in the same rank of life, in other countries of Europe." The traveller subsequently bears unequivocal testimony to the high toned morality and practical piety which abounds to an unusual degree among this simple race of people.

relations. Under the blighting influence of a false religion, with the exception of a limited number selected for special religious offices, this class of females were regarded formerly as mere cumberers of the ground, subjected to contempt, and sometimes made the scorn of society. In the more highly favored countries of christendom, very greatly has the aspect of their lot been meliorated. "There is no class of persons," Mr. Wilberforce once remarked, "whose situation has more improved than that of unmarried women, even within my recollection. Formerly, there was nothing useful, in which they could naturally be brought to engage,—now they can always find an object, in attending to the poor." If we glance around in our community, we find indeed, that it is to this class of females, the wretched are especially obliged to look for sympathy, the needy for relief, and the ignorant for instruction. Their age and experience, and their comparative exemption from domestic care, point them out, as the most appropriate agents in the operations of our numerous Bible, Missionary, Sunday School, and other benevolent societies. And they may judiciously incite to similar holy duties, the young and timid of their own sex, who ardently desire to be useful, but need the countenance, support and direction of elder friends, in untried fields of exertion. In all these ways, the large class of our unmarried females, should be endeavoring to serve their country and to advance the interests of their Lord. While thus laboring for immortality, and assiduously exerting themselves to let their light shine before men, in order that their heavenly Father may be glorified in, and by them, they will be rendered instrumental in diffusing the light of that glorious day, which already may be detected, illumining with its bright beams the face of our earth, which has been so long dimmed.

by having the light of God's countenance withdrawn from it. And let the unmarried females of our christian community ever bear in mind, that they are considered by the Apostle as having peculiar obligations imposed on them, to consecrate themselves unreservedly to the service of their Lord, by the very circumstances of their not being pledged to the discharge of the conjugal and maternal relations.

CHAPTER IX.

FEMALE TEACHERS OF AMERICA.

By reflecting minds accustomed to impartial observation, it can scarcely be questioned, that the refinements introduced by modern innovators into the system of instruction, operate far more disadvantageously on the cause of female, than of male education.

Our boys generally speaking, in the more approved seminaries of our country, are habituated to such studies, as are calculated, when not abused, to strengthen the intellectual faculties, and fit individuals for mental exertion, if they are not trained as far as we could wish to moral excellence. But in the case of our young females, it is obvious, that in numbers of our large and most popular schools, the system adopted, is far too exclusively calculated to cultivate the *senses* through the medium of mere accomplishments. Great multiplicity of pursuits are also presented for the consideration of the young and undisciplined mind; and to compass them all, it is necessary to pass from one to another with such rapidity, that it is almost impossible, the acquaintance with any one, under ordinary circumstances, can be more than superficial.

Opportunities are not often allowed during term-time for exercise, and this renders the long vacations sometimes, an evil rather than an advantage to the pupil. The release

from the over exertions and unreasonable restraint frequently imposed at school, give place too often, to a season of indolent self-indulgence at home. To these remarks I am happy to say, there are some honorable exceptions. Teachers who are admirably fitted for their responsible offices, many of whose pupils, having completed a thorough course, promise to give ample testimony to the wisdom and skill with which they have been disciplined.

To the female teachers of America as a body, the eyes of their country should be directed, as to those by whom a most efficient moral agency may be exerted. An American lady of high reputation in this department, has publicly advocated the expediency of committing the education of our young females entirely to those of her own sex. And if we can but properly prepare female teachers to fill the important post assigned them; in the present crisis, my judgment would strongly coincide with hers.

In those countries of Europe most distinguished for their efficient systems of national instruction, public attention has been directed to this subject, and in a report of the Royal Consistory of Munster, made a few years since, it is officially stated, that on examination it was found, that those schools for girls, which were under the instruction of female teachers, were in a much better condition, than those under the charge of male teachers. The advantages of such an arrangement, are, I conceive, two-fold; in the first place, the development of the female character in its full beauty, and symmetrical proportion can scarcely be expected from the hand of male teachers, whose mental conformation being different, they know not how ordinarily, by the most skilful application to remedy constitutional defects in minute points, or to form those habits which are essentially requisite to constitute the truly feminine character.

Male teachers are not either, so ready to manifest that tenderness and untiring patience, which is important in winning the affections and training the natures of young, and frequently timid beings. It is also highly important to provide respectable and useful occupation for the female portion of our population, who are continually thrown upon the world in a state of entire dependence, and who, unless some means of support can be presented to them, will necessarily, too often wear out lonely and wearisome existences, if not be driven to vicious expedients for their support. But if our females are to be invested with these privileges, they must generally speaking, be prepared to discharge their peculiar duties, by having their probable destination, kept before them, as the ultimate design of their own education. Mothers on this point, often inflict a serious injury on their daughters. Their circumstances being too straitened during their own life-time, and that of their husbands, to allow them the prospect of leaving their children even moderately independent, they are prone to dwell upon the probabilities of their daughters being called to teach, as to a most painful and laborious work, which is only to be resorted to in extremity. How much wiser is it, and how much more in accordance with true maternal tenderness, early to place before the daughters of our clergy and of other professional men of narrow incomes, the office of a teacher, as one of respectability and usefulness, the discharge of the duties of which, is perfectly compatible with the maintenance of the happiness of the individual.

While the young female is in a course of judicious preparation for her future office, she should not be allowed to remain ignorant of the important duties connected with domestic economy, a knowledge of which in no station of

our country should ever be dispensed with. Those thus trained, will if providentially called to exchange the office of teachers, for those of the conjugal and maternal relations, be enabled gracefully to resign the one for the other, and become only more valuable in a new sphere of action, from having been educated for another.

Mothers can do much to free their daughters from the prejudices which obtain in ill-regulated minds, in respect to the office of an instructor. The females called to sustain these duties, should take heed to themselves, that by their example and faithfulness to their high trust, they may teach others to honor it also.

It has been well remarked, that "the business of the legislator is but to continue the education of those, released from the control of their teachers." Accordingly, the office of the latter deserves to be honored, as among the most important of any established in the community. It will be in vain to exhort mankind to pay deference and respect to those, who shall by their conduct do nothing to substantiate their claims.

The female teachers of our country should be on the alert, studiously exerting themselves not to conform to, or to establish systems of instruction because they are calculated to render their seminaries fashionable or popular, but because they are adapted to the condition of those, over whom they have been constituted guardians, and to the exigencies of circumstances in which their pupils are to be placed. I have adverted to some of the evils which are obvious in many of our modern female schools, especially those which have obtained the questionable reputation of being, *the most fashionable*. May I be permitted to offer a few comments upon the tendency to display, which is a marked feature in the arrangements of many of

our seminaries. The word of God especially counsels its female readers to study to develope as the essential graces of their sex, humility, modesty, and domestic excellence. But in many, very many, of our schools conducted by professing disciples of the Redeemer, and publicly patronized by the ministers of his holy religion, the youthful female, is taught to prepare for the public exhibition of her acquirements, as a matter of course. The countenances, compositions, paintings, &c., of the pupils are exposed to the gaze of an audience too large for modest girls to face without emotion, when it is recollect'd that they are necessarily to be made, the centre of attraction. The forward and volatile, will be only too ready to obtrude themselves upon attention; but who can calmly assert that they will do it with impunity. The modest and sensitive will be exposed to an ordeal, more fiery than can be imagined by those, who have not experienced its scorching influence; while the disengenuous and artful will sometimes be induced to resort to unjustifiable methods for obtaining the applause, which they cannot rightfully secure.

I may be considered needlessly alive to the evils of such a system, and blinded by prejudice to its advantages; but I have conversed with many wise and experienced individuals on this subject, who have concurred with me in thinking, the dangers which menace our country from this quarter, to be neither trifling nor groundlessly anticipated. The possession of gold and silver medals received as the testimony of public approbation to a young lady's talents, or acquirements, or the gratification to a parent of seeing a daughter's themes emblazoned in public print, can never, I conceive, compensate for decrease in feminine modesty, or the acquisition of a taste, for the admiration of society.

Let our teachers then be admonished of the dangers arising to their female pupils from the practice of public exhibition, and let their aim be, not to gain popular applause, but to obtain and secure a strong and permanent influence over the moral nature.

Sparta felt to the inmost core, the evils resulting to her females, from their being habituated to a disgusting practice of exhibiting their persons before the public. America may be made to suffer deeply from her daughters being habituated to intellectual and personal display. The increasing good sense of the community, observes the judicious Caroline Fry, "I am happy to believe, is fast putting an end to the monstrous fiction of large schools under the control of irresponsible teachers. Small schools, of which the responsible governess is the real instructor and watchful companion of her pupils, have almost superseded these larger ones among the richer classes. Happy will be the generation in which the last expires, and parents less affluent, will be wiser, if in this respect they follow the example of the richer, though it be at the sacrifice of much which they now think it necessary their daughters should learn, and perhaps cannot afford in any other manner."

In adverting to the power lodged in the hands of the female teachers of America, I have hitherto addressed my remarks to those alone, who are engaged in the duties of secular instruction. Most important results will however be secured, if the large body of females in our country devoted to the cause of Sunday School operations, prove but faithful to Him to whom they have professedly consecrated their time, their talents, and their energies. Many christian minds have felt disappointed in not finding the results of this system, greater than they have as yet proved

to be. But may not a rational explanation be readily found for this fact, without in any degree militating against the excellence of the system itself? Whenever individuals have been found ready and willing to enter upon the duties of Sunday School instruction, with christian simplicity of purpose, and to practice the self-denial, and diligence, and to make use of the laborious efforts required in the consistent discharge of this responsible office, the system has not proved a failure. But I fear since the charm of novelty has disappeared, the undertaking has lost many of its attractions in the eyes of the community, and many young persons now enter upon the task of Sunday School teacher, as a matter of course,— because their pastor, parents or other friends urge their doing so, without, realizing in any adequate degree, the exceeding responsibility of the office which is assumed.

Prayer is by many Sunday School teachers, not felt to be the necessary thing, which it should ever be to those who hope for success in their work. Supplications, fervent, importunate and persevering, are not daily poured forth into the ear of God, for themselves and for their classes by those at their head. For both it is essential; we who teach need divine strength to be instructed how to impart properly, religious principles, and to train to pious habits, the wayward, the ignorant, and the wretched, who are so often committed to our care, and they who never perhaps have been taught to pray for themselves, and desire not to avail themselves of the privilege, forcibly demand from us the duty, which no one else probably will practise in their behalf. While supplications are restricted, exertions are too generally restricted also. Believe me, my female friends, it is no trifling or easy task we assume, when we offer our services as Sunday School teachers. We must study diligently,

or we cannot comprehend the truths we have undertaken to impart the knowledge of, to other and ignorant minds. We must visit our children in their own homes, and gain the sympathies of their parents also; we must labor to improve their social habits, as well as to enlarge their religious information. True, we shall have to endure hardships, to encounter difficulties, to submit perhaps to reproach and persecution, but while we have this promise of our Lord pledged to us, we should not allow our hearts to sink in despondency;—"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me"—and having done it unto him, we shall "in no wise lose our reward."

Besides the influence, which female Sunday School teachers, may exert by the blessing of God, over the moral and religious interests of the rising population, they are empowered also I am convinced, to do much for them in other respects, by seeking to refine their manners, and to fit them for their home duties. The eyes of foreigners, particularly of the English, are continually struck by the absence of an appearance of comfort, around the country and village dwellings of the lower order of our people. The real, substantial necessities of life are often found in an abundance, which would surprise an English peasant, while not a thought has been given by the female occupants, to embellishing or rendering home *attractive* to themselves, or to their husbands or fathers. Were but half the time devoted to visiting and idle gossip, by the mass of the wives and daughters of our inferior mechanic or agricultural population, but spent in making and keeping neat gardens—in whitening the walls and simple fences, porches and outbuildings, and at the same time in giving care to secure inside neatness, we should, I am convinced, ere

long, perceive an improvement of no trifling kind in the moral habits of the mass of our male citizens. They might be *won*, from scenes of excitement and debasing profligacy in many instances, would their wives and daughters be faithful to duty, in minor as well as in great points.

For meeting this exigency — for stirring up the body of our females of the poorer class to the performance of duty, the Sunday School teachers of their own sex, possess peculiar qualifications. The affection cemented between the faithful teacher and her pupils is found very strong. Her opinion is deferred to, in a surprising manner. If, assiduous in her visits to the parents of her charge, they too acquire a love for her, and welcome her coming. They become unreserved in their manners to her from a consciousness of having a common bond of sympathy. Her advice is asked, and often gratefully received and acted on, in matters of importance, and surely it may be in those which are of an inferior kind.

If she loves flowers, and takes interest in home embellishments, the teacher will be able to infuse, and I speak from experience, to a certain extent the same taste into the minds of those with whom she is thus constantly brought into contact under most favorable circumstances.

Believing this to be the case, I would affectionately, earnestly, and solemnly appeal to my countrywomen sustaining this relation, to be faithful to their God, their country, and the children committed to them.

CHAPTER X.

INFLUENCE OF VARIOUS PROFESSIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND BUSINESS PURSUITS ON AMERICAN SOCIETY.

In glancing over our wide spread union, with its varieties of climate, rich natural resources,—commercial, agricultural, and mineral,—and immense capabilities of improvement, a mind of even ordinary reflection cannot but be at times impressed by the idea, of the vast amount of power, moral, intellectual and physical, that will be needed to develope and perfect the whole.

The population of the United States, swelled as it has been, in an unexampled manner, is but inadequately fitted by physical ability to carry out into operation, a system of political economy suited to the exigencies of the country, unless there be a systematic arrangement established, which will prevent any portion of the limited strength from being wasted in prodigal excess, or neutralized by want of judgment in those, by whom it shall be exerted.

By setting apart separate classes of minds for distinct agencies, for which they exhibit a special adaptation, it is reasonable to suppose the harmonious action of the several parts of our federal body, can be most effectually secured; since perfection in any branch of secular knowledge is most readily attained by the attention of many minds being closely directed to the observation and noting of facts, especially connected with it; the combined mass of in-

formation being subsequently, arranged, digested and classified, so as to furnish a permanent addition to the previous stock of knowledge, scientific, professional, mechanical, &c., possessed by the human family.

The principle of subdivided labor, has produced scarcely less wonderful results in the intellectual, than in the mechanical world. Some individuals possess not only a peculiar aptitude, for one profession, science or trade, but may to advantage, exercise their natural taste still further, by selecting some peculiar branch of their favorite pursuit, by concentrating their undivided attention on which, they may be enabled to attain far greater skill, than were their energies allowed a more universal range.

It is by no means uncommon, to find individuals, endowed with great quickness of comprehension, originality of thought, and liveliness of imagination, who possess a special facility in inventing and speculating for other minds, engaged in the same mechanical, or scientific pursuits. Others on the contrary, may be met with, who are unable to originate for themselves, but can notwithstanding manifest their peculiar genius and habits of perseverance, by carrying out into practice and applying successfully, suggestions made to them, which but for such assistance as is afforded by them, might never have eventuated in any practical good to mankind. The history of science and literature furnish many cases of this kind, which forcibly remind us of the importance in a national point of view, of concentrating genius according to its special powers of adaptation, in the different professional, scientific, mechanical, &c., classes of American society.

It would savor of presumption, were a female writer, no better fitted for the task, than she, who pens these lines, to attempt to point out fully the advantages and disadvantages

to the country, of the various professional, scientific and business pursuits, and of the evils which would probably result to society, were the majority of our young men of the rising generation to manifest a disposition to condense their influence and strength in our large cities. It has however appeared to me, that I could not with propriety, press upon my countrywomen the duty of exerting properly the power, which is undoubtedly lodged in their hands, of influencing the youth of our country in the selection of their professional, scientific, or business pursuits, if I did not glance in a cursory manner at a subject, which in a more extended form, I should not from my limits, or abilities, venture to undertake.

Some writers on political economy have condescended to bestow no attention on the clergy as a body, hereby tacitly acknowledging, that they consider them vested with no amount of power, for ameliorating the social and civil condition of society. Not a few enlightened and discriminating minds, have however been found, openly maintaining the opinion, that the position occupied by the sacred profession in the respective countries of Christendom, at the present era, is one of vital importance. Under a democratic form of government, the whole mass of citizens become most generally animated by warm political feelings, which too frequently lead to party strife, and our public men are often insatiable in their thirst for the discussion of topics calculated to arouse angry and jealous feelings. Under such circumstances, the sacred order, who, by virtue of their professional views, are pledged to act as peacemakers, and promoters of all that is holy, lovely, and of good report, should be considered as invested with unusually great responsibilities. Most imposing would be the spectacle, and vast the amount of moral power exerted by

our clerical fellow citizens, would they with a dignity worthy of their honorable station, stand aloof from active participation in party questions, and refuse to lend their influence to widen the breach between political parties! In the excitements which have of late stirred up the feelings of our countrymen so deeply and widely, too many of our clergy have been seen by their example and expressions, swelling public commotion, instead of endeavoring to speak peace to the troubled passions, which threaten to disorganize the frame-work of American society to the centre. Nothing can however prove more fatal to the interests of true piety, than identifying any of our religious denominations with respective party leaders. It is certainly just and proper, that to the American ministry there should be awarded, the same unfettered exercise of judgment on public matters, as is enjoyed by other citizens of the republic; but let them never allow the absorbing interests of their Divine head, or the mission of beneficence and mercy entrusted to them, to become merged in the strife and turmoil of this lower world. As ambassadors of Christ to their fellow men under whatsoever banner they may be enlisted, they are required to prove to the world, that the blessings conveyed to mankind in the great charter of their spiritual privileges, are entirely independent of, and superior to, political considerations. They should be setting forth the truth in all its purity, exerting their influence for the practical good of their country, and should be laboring in season and out of season, on the one hand to lay bare the pollutions of the heart of corrupt man, and on the other, to unsold the true and only way, by which passions may be bridled, affections disciplined, and habits reformed. When the ministry of our country shall prove themselves faithful and energetic in the use of means, the

promise of God is pledged to secure a blessing on their labors; and they shall become the most efficient instruments in promoting good order and law, in diffusing sound education, and in carrying on the great benevolent operations of the day. When the law has by its authoritative voice sentenced the criminal to the severe penalties which his sins have deserved, and he is immured in the walls of his prison-house, to await the execution of the law, then to her clergy, does the country commit her guilty son for the last hope which may yet be vouchsafed to him. The ministry too, stand ready at the altar to receive in God's name, the infant sons and daughters of the republic, and to pronounce the divine benediction on them, and to present a petition that in the spring time of life, they may be sanctified for duty. Under all these varying aspects, the clerical profession should be regarded as the most important among all those, under which our countrymen are ranged, to the order, well-being, and highest interests of our beloved land.

Whether we turn to the annals of ancient or modern nations, we are compelled to acknowledge, that in the seasons of greatest peril, some of their most efficient conservatives, have been found included in the ranks of the legal profession. The Gracchi who stood forwards as the zealous champions of Roman liberty, and the resolute opponents of public corruption, early distinguished themselves at the bar of their native city. Cicero was diligently trained to legal knowledge by Mutius Scaevola, and declared himself so well acquainted with its mysteries, as not to fear a contest with any of the most eminent of his profession. The memorable part which he acted in the deliverance of his country from the nefarious designs of Cataline and his brother conspirators, is familiar to the

reader of Roman history; he received public testimony of the gratitude of his fellow countrymen, who awarded him the honor of being styled "the father of his country, and a second founder of Rome." The most able orators of Rome were generally numbered in the same class, and her dearest interests were not unfrequently suspended, humanly speaking, on the breath of him, who united in his person the reputation for oratorical and legal skill.

I should trespass upon my limits, were I to seek to bring forward evidence to prove the close connection which has ever existed, between the political history of England and her judicial institutions. Facts illustrative of the truth will be familiar to most of my readers. When we turn our eyes to our own land and consider the steps by which she has risen to eminence among other nations, from a state of colonial dependence, we find at every stage of her progress, some of her most eminent servants taken from the ranks of the legal profession. Few Americans hearts will fail to glow with honest exultation, at the mention of Jay, Hamilton, Ames, Henry, &c., who were so intimately associated with our early history; while in later days, Marshall, Webster, Clay, Frelinghuysen, Southard, with others of the same profession, have formed, as it were, the radii of the wheel, by which, under Providence, the framework of our political body was made to revolve. For the conservation of her national interests, America must direct her attention to minds such as these, well versed in the principles of jurisprudence, which as has been happily remarked, "pushes its roots into all the departments of human science, and spreads its branches over every object that concerns mankind."*

* Sketches of Public Character by Lord Brougham, vol. i.

But it must not be forgotten, that although, the power conferred by the legal profession on her members when legitimately exercised, has enabled them to be eminently useful in originating and furthering plans for the civil security and political prosperity of nations, it has when abused or perverted, by the factious and unprincipled, served to add violence to intestine commotion, and to pave the way more readily to public ruin. Such characters have ever abounded in our fallen world, and they have been only too eager to gratify ambitious desires and the thirst for personal aggrandizement at the expense of their country. In this nation, as in ancient Greece and Rome, it has not unfrequently happened, that the law has been made the stepping stone, by which such unprincipled individuals have been introduced into political life. In both of these spheres of action, sinister measures have been resorted to, and unsound principles have been advocated, in their tendency wholly inimical to the promotion of public and private good.

The profession of the law, may then by the divine blessing, under proper restrictions, exert a most powerful conservative influence on the prosperity of America, by securing to her, a band of able, profound, and wise counsellors, trained by the mental discipline essential to legal science, to such habits of mind as essentially fit them to test the principles of political action, by their adaptation to the peculiar and changing circumstances of American society,—to the wants of a nation occupying a position among others essentially unique,—without examples after which it can be closely modelled, and wanting precedents on many points, necessary to be regulated in political economy.

It may however prove a bane to our republic, if by its intimate connection with political life, it shall increasingly allure to its ranks, the young and ambitious spirits who are rapidly rising up around us, and who might be, save for the facilities furnished by practice at the bar, restrained from such effective exercise of their intellectual abilities, as when found combined with corrupt propensities, may be liable to convulse the whole frame-work of American society.

While man continues to inhabit a frail tenement of clay, so long, must medical science be considered as exerting a powerful influence in ameliorating the ills of humanity. In a country situated like our own, with an infinite variety of soil and climate, which induce numberless distinct local diseases; with a population kept in a constant state of fluctuation, by the tide of immigration; one year exposed to the cold and bracing atmosphere of the North, and the next subjected to the scorching sun, and debilitating influences of the South, the responsibility and importance in a national point of view, of the medical profession is greatly increased. A heart of ordinary sensibility cannot glance over the bills of mortality, published in various section of the union, and note the immense number of deaths in the infant portion of our population alone, without feeling the vast debt of gratitude that may be incurred by our citizens to medical practitioners, in the management of the large class of painful and often fatal diseases, to which the infantine frame is subject. Often is an American female, in the wide regions of the West, or in remote and secluded situations of the East, compelled during successive days to behold the progressive development of disease in the frame of a beloved relative, whose life may seem to her, essentially connected with the happiness and well-being of a large family; she will call in the aid of

the best physician within her reach, but may find to her unspeakable anguish, physical sufferings, apparently aggravated rather than mitigated by unskillful medical management! Must not such an one, give her unequivocal testimony to the exceeding preciousness of that noble science, which could have enabled one of its diligent and intelligent disciples, promptly to have detected the characteristic indications of morbid action in any vital part of the system,— from given premises to have deduced proofs as to the nature of local disorder, and after reflection on these, to have suggested the appropriate means for mitigating suffering, and by the divine blessing of eradicating disease in the case of one whose death she has been called to mourn?

It was long the boast of the infidel, that it was the decided tendency of medical science to foster the views of the materialist, and to encourage its students in the rejection of the truths of revelation. Numerous indeed have been the cases of medical men, who have by their example, tended to strengthen the evidence in favor of such an opinion. But on the contrary, many eminent names, such as Boerhave, Haller, Good, Pearson, Hey, of Leeds, besides many of our own countrymen, might be adduced to prove, that this noble science, is far from being necessarily hostile to the promotion of true piety.

The great and learned Haller, whose abilities adorned the university of Gottingen, and raised it to celebrity, was at his entrance on a medical career, strongly assailed by doubts on the subjects of christian belief. But these doubts were dispelled, by a dispassionate examination of the evidences of christianity, and subsequently, by a careful and habitual perusal of the scriptures. In later years he made

a diligent application to every branch of science in conjunction with these sacred studies.

In the early part of his life, the late eminent Dr. John Mason Good, was also led to embrace certain dangerous opinions in religion, and his biographer informs us, that subsequently, he deeply lamented the errors in practice, which resulted from those opinions; yet could he never be drawn aside into the ranks of infidelity, to which assiduous efforts were used to attach him, for the early religious impressions made on his mind, could not be effaced. The Bible which in childhood he had been taught to read, continued to be a favorite study with him. He extolled its merits in a literary point of view, and while searching its pages, the promise of the Saviour was verified in his own experience, and he was made to see, that it testified so strongly to the claims of Jesus, as the Son of God, that he was led by the divine blessing to render Him allegiance as his Lord and Master.

During the latter years of his life, he was an efficient supporter of the leading charitable and religious operations of the day. He likewise exemplified his piety in his intercourse with his patients. When called to prescribe for any intricate disorder, he was assiduous in prayer for divine guidance, and while administering the nauseous draught, might frequently be heard uttering a short ejaculatory prayer, and when the diseases of his patients assumed a fatal type, he was always faithful, so far as his influence extended, in preserving the dying from the deception so often practiced on them on these trying occasions.

It cannot but be very important to combine sound practical piety with enlightened medical knowledge. The deserving physician becomes in the families of his patients a most influential character, especially in those of the lower

ranks of life. In cases, where members of domestic circles among the poor have been led aside into vicious habits, the advice, pious counsel, and faithful exhortations of the family physician is often signally blessed. The heart hitherto obdurate by long continuance in intemperance and vicious excess, becomes humbled by the pressure of pain, and the visible approach of death; and the ear is opened to exhortation and prayer from its medical attendant, when from any other lips, they would be perhaps slighted, if not despised. The physician to the body, may thus be honored in being made a physician to the soul of the individual, who if subsequently restored to health, may date the dawn of its brighter prospects to the bed of suffering, and the pious faithfulness of its medical attendant, and if summoned away by death, may be saved by his instrumentality.

When on the other hand, the character of physician and infidel, are associated in the same person, we can scarcely venture to pronounce as to the fearful limits to which the evil may lead. Thrown by the circumstances of their profession into scenes of greater temptation than those to which other young men are ordinarily exposed, the corps of medical students in our large cities, too often becomes a nuisance to the community, and either directly or indirectly, its members may be found the agents of a vast deal of moral evil, and of civil disturbance.

It will be serviceable to us, when attempting to form an estimate of the powerful influence which the commercial and mercantile ranks of American citizens are capable of exerting over the interests of this nation, to take a glance at England. The British Isles when compared with other countries of Christendom, are but of diminutive extent, and yet the political importance which this great empire

possesses in reference to the whole human family, is immense. Britain early saw the wisdom of teaching many of her children to find their homes on the mighty deep, and of training others to habits of commercial activity. The results have been important to her in many respects. Her territorial possessions have been greatly enlarged, and she has been enabled to draw to her treasury, contributions from all quarters of the globe. While in the lapse of the last five or six centuries, her constitution has been greatly improved, and the civil and social privileges of her children have been augmented, by the influence which her commerce has exerted.

It is interesting to note the use to which the Almighty has turned the spirit of commercial enterprize, in the onward progress of society. Martial occupations during the dark ages, were absorbing subjects of interest to the different nations of Europe, and formed as it were, the great business of life to the mass of the male inhabitants. But when a taste for commercial pursuits was diffused abroad, belligerent occupations and martial science became decreasingly attractive.

The history of Florence and her sister cities of Italy, who were early and largely engaged in such undertakings, as well as that of other towns in Germany and the Netherlands, prove how intimately connected, the revival of literature and the improvement of civil and social privileges were, with mercantile enterprise. The exorbitant power which under the feudal system was lodged in the ranks of the nobility, became modified and restricted, when crowned heads thought it expedient to exalt the trading class among their subjects, to increased privileges as a counteractive power, by incorporating mercantile frater-

nities, and by granting municipal jurisdiction to certain cities.*

In our own times, the Almighty has seen fit to employ the commercial classes of mankind for not less important purposes. He has made them not unfrequently, rods wherewith to chasten the guilty, while on other occasions, they have been made the means of accomplishing most benevolent designs in his providential government. The trading speculations of our own, and other great commercial countries, often indicate a morbid, rather than a healthy excitement in the body politic in which they are observable, and eventuate very frequently in a crash, involving in disaster, individuals no less than communities. Never perhaps, was this spirit more rife among our countrymen, than of late years. The fact is rendered more appalling from the circumstance, that many! alas too many! bearing the christian name, are ensnared by temptations from this quarter. Instead of rendering obedience to the commands of their Master, by being "careful for nothing," many professing christians from early dawn till latest eve, may at this moment be seen engaged in trading speculations or visionary schemes, and who are depending on mere contingencies, and not resting as they are bound to do, on Providence. The ultimate object of these calculations is often, but to secure a little more of the perishable things of time, for the individuals or for their families, than God in his providential allotment of their circumstances, has seen fit to assign them. It is however doing discredit to their holy calling, and affording great occasion for the enemies of piety to triumph, when the avowed disciples of it are

*On this subject the reader will find full and satisfactory information in "Hallam's Middle Ages," and in Dr. Robertson's Introduction to his "History of Charles V."

found vying with the votaries of the world, in the employment of time and energy. What may not the worldly man be tempted to think of the realities of religion, when he sees the nominal professor, with a brow as anxious, and an air as perplexed as his own, poring over the secular papers in order to ascertain the price of stocks, or the probable issue of extravagant commercial speculations?

England has been stigmatised by her gay sister of France, as being a nation of shop-keepers, and her American daughter, promises to emulate her example in this, as in other respects. But may not the incessant commercial activity which pervades our Union, if rightly improved, eventuate in great ultimate good, if hereby a channel be opened for carrying off an excitability of temperament, which if denied this mode of escape, might occasion a dangerous fermentation in our democratic government, exposing us to some alarming political excitements or civil commotions? It has served moreover, and still is serving, as an efficient auxiliary in extending the blessings of civilization, and the light of religious and intellectual truth over distant heathen nations, as well as through the new and growing sections of our country. The trader in our western and northern regions, has almost always served as the pioneer of learning and religion, among the ignorant and unconverted, whether in savage or nominally civilized life. In many a spot of our wide spread western valley, have the native sons of the forest or rude emigrants been found, living without the word of God to guide them, or the ordinances or ministers of religion to bless and instruct them, who might have gone down to the grave in darkness and hopelessness, but for the spirit of commercial enterprise which had animated some young and ardent bosom. Such an one, while on a tour of traffic, has not unfrequently

by accident, as it seemed to him, discovered cases of this kind, and subsequently on his return home, by making known their existence and spiritual desolation to others, has been the means of leading the missionary or secular teacher, to go to them and enlighten their ignorance, and cheer them with the blessings of religion and civilization.

In the selection even of the merchandize necessary to supply a secluded village in our wide spread Union, the mercantile man, unconsciously perhaps, is preparing himself to exert a great amount of influence, either of a salutary or pernicious kind. He may invest his funds in a collection of articles of so useful and judicious a kind, that the domestic comforts of the neighborhood in which he is located, may be exceedingly promoted. He may also disseminate a number of practical and interesting volumes, both of a secular and religious kind, which may heighten the intellectual happiness of many, and perhaps by God's blessing, be the means of the spiritual conversion of some precious souls. He may on the other hand, by consulting only his selfish views of pecuniary aggrandizement, introduce into the community of which he has made himself a member, a collection of tawdry and yet cheap finery, which may serve as a temptation to the surrounding females, to indulge the dangerous passion for personal decoration, for the gratification of which, the young and volatile when destitute of sound principle, are too often found ready to sacrifice their virtue. The mercantile man of the west, knows full well, that vanity is to be found an inmate of log cabins as well as of the more imposing dwellings of higher life, and knowing it, he should beware how he makes himself the means, of fanning the flame which cannot but scathe the bosom in which it is allowed to remain unchecked. The country merchant especially,

may become the means of greatly aggravating or lessening the miseries of American society in another respect, by becoming the medium for diffusing or checking the progress of a deadly evil, which has already sapped the foundation of our social and political prosperity. I allude to the facility which he possesses, of tampering with the sinful propensities of too many of our citizens, especially in the lower ranks of life, for the indulgence of intoxicating liquors. My limits will forbid my entering farther into detail as to the peculiar responsibilities lodged in the hands of the trading classes of our community. Let Americans ever remember, that what has been effected for England by the spirit of mercantile enterprise, may by the divine blessing, be also secured to their own land by the same means. As a commercial nation, we already rank second only to our mother country, and by the latest and most satisfactory calculations, the number engaged in the subordinate ranks of nautical life as seamen, including those connected with the navy, amounts to near 100,000 individuals. To this class of persons great responsibilities are entrusted, and this fact should seriously arrest the attention of Americans--viz: that a very large proportion of our seamen are at present formed of foreigners,—aliens from us by birth, and estranged from us in sympathies. American sailors in point of character, rank high among their brethren of the same profession, for activity, honesty and industry. Let us see that these ranks are more generally filled by our own countrymen, who, from enjoying greater political, civil, and religious privileges than the inhabitants of other lands, should be better fitted by these circumstances, and by the spirit of patriotism, to sustain and further the interests of their country and the cause of Protestantism. It would indeed be a subject of thankful-

ness, if the commercial activity of the American nation should become sanctified by a spirit of religious enterprise, so that the star spangled banner might form as it were, the beacon, to which the anxious eyes of the benighted heathen could be directed, for the supply of the blessed word of God, which can alone cheer them with the light of life.

American merchants of piety and wealth have already done much for the extension of our Redeemer's kingdom, both at home and abroad. On them, their country must especially depend, for pecuniary means for the furtherance of her nobly planned schemes of missionary and colonization exertion, and other philanthropic undertakings, since in the commercial classes of our country it is, that wealth preponderates; as to them much is given, so of them much will be required, and in casting in to the treasury of the Lord, of their abundance for Christ's sake, they may be instrumental in drawing down the choicest blessings from heaven, on the land of their birth.

The testimony afforded by natural science to the truths of scripture has of late years especially, been most decisive and conclusive. The practical advantages of the extension of this branch of human learning on the community, have been equally obvious. Each day as it passes over our heads, witnesses some additional convenience furnished for social and domestic life,—or some useful invention of great practical benefit to the cause of arts, manufactures, or agriculture, which originated perhaps, in the speculations of some scientific mind, and at first glance may have seemed wholly unprofitable to the individual, or to society at large. The philanthropist will however, see reason to advocate the study of natural science on other grounds. Those who have from early life have been habituated to

observation on nature, and who in after years, have been led to analyze the facts which are presented in its various departments in such profusion, on religious and scientific principles, will generally be found the most cheerful and happy members of the community; bearing perpetually within them, the elements of mental enjoyment, independent of external circumstances. In this way perhaps, better than by any other human expedient, may be checked the *ennui*, fatally destructive to private enjoyment, and dangerous in its effects on public morals; the habits of dissipation and thoughtless extravagance, injurious to society, being in numerous instances, referable to that craving and morbid thirst for artificial excitement, common to unoccupied minds. It is an interesting fact, that a large proportion of the leading men who have been engaged in the pursuit of natural science, have been moral and amiable, if not pious. Men in character, resembling Linnæus, Cuvier, Kirby, Ray, and Silliman, must unavoidably become blessings to the communities in which they reside. No class of writers have more earnestly labored to enlist the intellectual sympathies of our youthful citizens, in the cause of piety than those of whom we are now speaking. They have made the great volume of nature, the text book from which they have deduced evidences of the great and glorious attributes of the Divine mind.

While the tendency of these pursuits is evinced to be favorable to the diffusion of intelligence and morality among the people of all countries, there is also a reaction of mental feeling well deserving of attention. The increased intellectual activity generated in these studies, serves to fertilize soil for the germination of new shoots of natural science, which has never flourished to such ad-

vantage as in countries, where mind has been allowed free exercise.

Botany, geology, chemistry, and natural philosophy, are bringing in their aid, to assist in developing and perfecting the agricultural, manufacturing and mining operations of our country. We are learning slowly, but surely, this salutary lesson, that scientific knowledge can be rendered under proper restrictions, eminently serviceable in promoting practical improvement in business pursuits, with which our forefathers did not conjecture it could have much connection.

Many expensive experiments in agriculture might have been avoided, had the soil been previously analyzed on the principles of chemical investigation, and expedients to counteract its deficiencies, been supplied from the same source, instead of time having been wasted and expense having been incurred, by carrying out improvements which originated from no sound principles.

A tolerable acquaintance with geology, would have showed the impracticability of operations in mining and collieries, which having been attempted on theoretic views, or without just regard to the usual course of nature, have involved many sanguine and worthy individuals, with their families, in utter ruin. A knowledge of the laws of nature will not only enable our countrymen to improve their condition, by suggesting counteracting expedients for remedying positive evils in their condition, but will also empower them to increase their actual resources in various directions, to an almost indefinite extent. Time would fail me, were I to enter into detail on this interesting subject, upon which volumes might be written to advantage.*

*The national advantages which may result, from a proper use made of those pursuits connected with Natural Science, are eloquently

Let me advert to the immense extent to which the application of steam power has been carried within the last century. "It is well known," says Dr. Herschell, "that there is virtue in a bushel of coals properly consumed to raise 70,000,000 lbs. weight, a foot high. One engine stretching its long arms over an extensive manufactory, can keep thousands of spinning-wheels actively occupied, while at the same time, it serves to keep in motion the set of machines which card the raw cotton preparatory to spinning, and others which weave the thread after it has been spun."

noticed by one of its favorite disciples in the following terms:

"I shall not labor to prove how delightful and instructive it is to
‘Look through Nature up to Nature’s God.’"

Neither surely need I demonstrate that if any judicious or improved use is to be made of the natural bodies around us, it must be expected from those who discriminate their kinds and study their properties. Of the benefits of Natural Science in the improvement of many arts, no one doubts. Our food, our physic, our luxuries are improved by it. By these inquiries various new acquisitions are made in remote countries, and our resources of various kinds are augmented. The skill of Linnæus by the most simple observation, founded however on scientific principles, taught his countrymen to destroy an insect, the *Cantharis navalis*, which had cost the Swedish Government many thousand pounds yearly, by its ravages on the timber of one dock-yard only. After its metamorphoses and the session when the fly laid its eggs, were known, all its ravages were stopped by immersing the timber in water during that period. The same great observer, by his botanical knowledge, detected the cause of a dreadful disease among the horned cattle of the north of Lapland, which had previously been thought equally unaccountable and irremedial, and of which he has given an exquisite account in his Lapland tour, as well as under the head of *Cicuta virosa* in his *Flora Lapponica*. One man in our days, by his scientific skill alone, has given the bread fruit to the West Indies, and his country justly honors his character and pursuits."—*Introduction to physiological and systematic Botany.* Sir J. E. Smith.

The physical power which American citizens feel conscious that they need for the developing of the rich natural resources of the land of their birth, may be supplied to them, by the forces which God has commissioned to assist his creatures in the accomplishment of his wise purposes; but which resources would to all effect, remain inert, did not natural philosophy and the various branches of natural science, teach our citizens to combine and apply various materials in the most advantageous manner.

It seems not unwarrantable to suppose, that on certain accounts, the application of scientific principles to practical mechanics, may be a matter of especial policy to many of our youthful citizens. While the non-existence of a privileged class among us, makes it much more difficult in America than elsewhere, to conjecture as to the probable position to be held in society by individuals from the circumstances of birth and station, it is yet generally admitted, that, to ensure the highest place in the professional ranks, it is requisite there be attention given by the aspirants to such distinction, to the usual course of collegiate instruction, either at an early or later period of life. But even in older and monarchical countries, where jealousy is entertained as to the encroachments of the lower ranks of society, honors and literary fame, have been received and enjoyed by young men, who, in humble life have been from necessity or the force of genius, impelled to concentrate their mental energies in the channel now specified. If where great debilities exist for securing the desired object, important benefits have been conferred on individuals and on society, by the application of scientific truth to mechanics, in the persons of those whose birth and station were lowly,— how much more good may be secured to us, where a youth born in a cabin of the western wilderness,

ranks in point of political privileges, on a level with the most favored child of fortune?

Humphrey Davy, was born in a small town of Cornwall, England, in which his father followed the trade of a carver in wood. Young Davy began his eventful career as apprentice in the shop of a petty apothecary of his native county. The kitchen utensils, no less than the phials of his master, were by him, called in requisition, for the accomplishment of his favorite plans. When a French vessel was wrecked on the coast of Cornwall, he received in return for some services rendered by him, a set of worn out tools from the surgeon's chest; these were seized on with avidity, and carefully treasured up, and with the aid afforded by them, he performed successfully experiments, by which he tested truths of the greatest importance to his fellow creatures.

The improvements suggested by James Watt in the application of steam in mechanics, have effected mighty changes in manufactures and commerce, not only in his own country, but throughout the world. Indeed it may be confidently affirmed, that by his instrumentality, England has been invested with an amount of power, in reference to trade, which nearly doubles what she previously possessed. This extraordinary man, whose fame is proverbial in two hemispheres, was the child of humble parentage. When he left Scotland to seek his own fortune, he hired himself as an humble assistant to a mathematical instrument maker in London. The life of Sir James Arkwright may furnish another case in point.

The history of our own Franklin, proves with what peculiar force scientific truth in the mind of the working classes of America may be brought to bear upon the destiny of an individual, and of mankind. His fame has

become a part of his country's. Oliver Evans was an American mechanic. By many he was considered a mere visionary, when moving in advance of the times in which he flourished, he ventured to perform publicly, experiments, proving the elastic properties of steam; and when in addition to the bold avowal of his peculiar views, he presumed seventy years since, to predict, "that the child was then born, who would travel in carriages propelled by steam, at the rate of 15 miles per hour," he was deemed to be more than visionary and to be completely insane. While the labors of many whose lives have been devoted to the cause of literature, or of abstract science, have in their results added nothing *directly* to the prosperity of the communities of which they were members, the advantages conferred by the practical and scientific mechanic, may be vividly perceived and appreciated by all classes of society.

History informs us, that the advocates of papacy boldly arrayed themselves in opposition to the press, when printing was first discovered. Some of the most violent, who dreaded the loss of power which would thereby result to them, from the weakening of their hold on the superstitious minds of the multitude, scrupled not to say publicly, "we must root out printing, or printing will root out us!" Experience has proved the truth of these predictions, for no one art, has led to more marked changes in society than typography. The word of God — by the facility with which printed impressions of it, can in the original and by translations, be multiplied and disseminated, seems to verify the Apocalyptic vision, in which the angel bearing the everlasting gospel, is represented as being impeded in his progress, neither by oceans or continents. Science too, has felt the power of this mighty auxiliary.

The champions of a pure faith and those of sound literature, are enabled from the rich store-houses open to them, to collect and condense materials for the multitude whose advantages are inferior to their own; or like the bee, may extract from various quarters and from both hemispheres, sweets, wherewith to enrich that great temple of truth which is common to our species.

The extent of influence lodged in the press of our country, is indeed immense, and her dearest interests are susceptible of being vitally affected by it. An intelligent and pious mind can scarcely fail to be deeply impressed, when visiting a large printing establishment, with the thoughts of the great moral power, which must emanate therefrom, on the surface of society. The influence which may be exerted, by the sheets printed in one such office, on a single day, is by no means of trifling extent, while the sentiments embodied in the works sent forth in the course of a year or two, by one flourishing establishment, may affect the destinies of millions for coming ages. The compositors while engaged in their business will be the first assailed for good or evil, but here will be only the commencement of the work. The sheets will be sent forth on society, and if deserving of notice, they will, and must operate in a malign or salutary manner upon its members.

I have been certified of facts, which prove more forcibly than words, the power of the press, as regards the class of compositors alone, irrespective of that which may subsequently be exerted on the public at large. In two large printing establishments, one located in New York, and the other in Philadelphia, cases of genuine conversion occurred among the journeymen engaged in setting the type of two different, but almost equally valuable works on the evidences of Christianity. Those who had turned a deaf

ear to arguments in favor of revelation, when addressed to them in public or private, and who had refused to read, on the subject when to do so, was optional, found no mode of escape from the unpleasant topic, when it came in a form which compelled attention; as compositors they were forced to do, what as reasonable beings, they had objected to. The results in both cases were most happy; since they who entered on the task as infidels, were so arrested and convicted by Him, whose office it is, to convince of sin, that they were constrained to continue their work as penitents and to conclude it, as christians indeed. Too often alas! has the reverse been observable and the subject which gave employment to the compositor, has been the means of implanting vicious sentiments and infidel opinions, only the more deeply in the mind. Even on this ground alone, they must be convicted of guilt, who by purchasing with avidity light and trifling works of fiction, and what is still worse, volumes polluted with licentious and impure sentiments, or by infidelity, have tempted, or shall hereafter tempt the publishers of our country, to send forth fresh editions of them to corrupt the compositors of America, no less than the reading public.

On the large and influential class of our citizens, the publishers of the United States, great responsibility is imposed for on their soundness of principle, firmness, and activity, the healthful state of the press is chiefly dependent. They are indeed the guardians, to whom their country commits in keeping a power, whose capabilities of accomplishing good or evil, in proportion as it is regulated on proper principles, can scarcely be measured by finite intellects. It is by its clarion voice, that the mass of our citizens, can be most effectually warned of impending evils, which threaten our religious, no less than our social,

civil, and political liberties; it is to it, likewise that our people should turn for rational and sound information, as to the policy which should be adopted for the averting of the evils which menace us; and for the securing of pure creeds, both religious and political. To indoctrinate thoroughly the youth of America with pure and wholesome truths, is one of the surest ways to secure them under the temptations which assail them in the present day, from enemies visible and invisible. Our publishers are the persons commissioned especially by Providence, to prepare the suitable text-books for the instruction of others. A writer however highly gifted, and to whatsoever extent adapted for usefulness, is but a powerless being comparatively, when disjoined from publishers and printers.

At the present moment, while a wholesome tone of sentiment is becoming increasingly prevalent in various quarters and the press in the hands of the virtuous is sending forth thrilling appeals in behalf of true religion, it is also by the unprincipled, made the medium of disseminating a vast deal that is erroneous and dangerous. The spirit of faction leagued to that of infidelity, may be heard in high places, vauntingly boasting it will overturn—not, till He comes, who has asserted that he is to govern by right alone, but till the selfish desires of lawless spirits shall be fully satiated, and nothing more shall remain unsubverted to their power!

CHAPTER XI.

IMPORTANCE OF AGRICULTURAL PURSUITS TO THE INTERESTS OF AMERICA.

An intelligent foreigner, who has turned his attention especially to the observation of American institutions, habits, and manners, remarks, "agriculture is perhaps, of all the useful arts, that which improves most slowly among democratic nations. Frequently indeed, it would seem stationary, because other arts are making rapid strides towards perfection. On the other hand, almost all the tastes and habits which the equality of conditions engenders, naturally lead men to commercial and industrial occupations."*

To a certain extent this opinion is probably correct, but stated in too strong terms. It may notwithstanding, serve as a salutary admonition to our countrymen, teaching them from the very fact itself, the especial importance of turning public attention more closely and pointedly to the subject of agricultural science.

The constitution of the American republic in one feature, presents a striking contrast, with that of any of the States of ancient Greece. They with few exceptions, were composed of cities with their adjoining districts, and their constitutions were accordingly the constitutions of cities.†

*De Tocqueville.

†Heeren's Politics of Ancient Greece. Chap. ix.

This nation on the contrary, has from the earliest period of her existence, looked not primarily to the inhabitants of towns, but to those resident in the country for her main dependence. Nay, there has been a jealous dread continually manifested by our republican brethren, lest the largest cities of the several states should attain therein, a supremacy of influence. The meetings of state legislatures have, it is well known, almost uniformly been removed after a season, principally on this account, from the original capitals to smaller cities.

Nor is it without reason, that Americans dread the effect which might be produced, were the large cities of the Union to become like the capital of France, the points towards which the strength and vigor of the nation, both intellectual and moral, should be almost exclusively directed. To a certain extent, there will unavoidably, be a natural tendency in the country population, to be drawn off to large towns, but long may it be, ere the movement becomes so general and impulsive in America, as it has been for centuries in France. So serious has the evil grown to be in the latter country, that her philosophic statesmen have been heard, adjuring the various ranks of the nation, seriously to consider the subject in a political point of view, and to unite in adopting counteractive measures.

By example, as well as precept, the venerated father of our country uniformly studied to elevate the science and profession of agriculture, to a high rank among his countrymen. He took a personal interest, and frequently, an active part in such pursuits, and one cannot read his correspondence on this subject, without feeling how deeply he entered into the sympathies of rural life, or how well fitted he considered them to occupy the attention of the wisest and most enlightened sons of the republic.

The sagacity of Jefferson as a statesman, has never been questioned on those points, on which his mind was allowed unbiassed exercise; uninfluenced by the perversions of a false philosophy. He has however left to his countrymen the unqualified expression of his opinion, as to the expediency on political considerations, of strengthening the agricultural interests of our country. "Corruption of morals in the mass of cultivators," he declared "is a phenomenon of which no nation has furnished an example. It is the mark set on those, whose toil and industry depend on the casualties and caprice of customers. Dependence begets subservience, and generally suffocates the germ of virtue, and prepares fit tools for the designs of ambition. This is the natural progress and consequence of accidental circumstances; but generally speaking, the proportion which the aggregate of other citizens bear in the state, to that of husbandmen, is the proportion of its unsound to its healthy parts, and is a good enough barometer, whereby to measure its corruption."

The expression of the American statesman no less than those of the French philosophical traveller, require qualification, yet do they both tend strongly to confirm the belief, that the class of our citizens whom we are now engaged in contemplating, should be regarded as vitally important to the conservation of the best interests of American society, which we believe especially demands that the agricultural, should stand in close connection and on a footing of equality, with the commercial and manufacturing departments of labor. In respect to those of her children who have been appointed by God, to tread the paths of honest poverty in rural life, we may find strong evidence for the opinion, that their intellectual and moral interests are likely to be essentially promoted by their peculiar oc-

cupations. Restricted, as numbers of the inferior classes of mechanics, manufacturers and trades people, are, from improving conversation and books, and compelled by stern necessity to pursue day after day, and year after year, the same limited and dull routine of manual exertion, the intellectual powers often remain dormant, if they do not become perverted, by the current of evil thoughts common to fallen man, and peculiarly so to those, whose physical systems are rendered morbid by being confined to an unwholesome atmosphere and unhealthy postures of body. Evil sentiments are also diffused in a proportionate ratio, to the number of vicious minds associated in their dissemination. The torrents of corruption will spread more widely and rapidly according to the size of the stream itself, which is but a collection of drops that are powerless, comparatively in a state of unity. Both in crowded shops or factories, in the densely filled streets, and in the compact suburban dwellings, there are innumerable malign influences at work to injure the minds of those, who, if employed in agricultural occupations, would have been to a comparative degree, shielded from such temptations.

In another respect, agricultural pursuits may be regarded as highly beneficial to the country, by furnishing a proper field for the exercise of native energy and activity, both physical and intellectual, which if denied any legitimate scope, might endanger the peace of the community, and the interests of society at large. The mobs and riots which have disturbed the public quiet of this land, and those still more sanguinary ones which have endangered the lives of multitudes in other countries, have not had their origin in the agricultural class. The physical exertion necessary to the latter, with their limited opportunities of congregating with others, and their exemption from

city stimulants, have, I doubt not, averted the loss of many valuable lives, and much robbery and pillage from the western portions of this country especially, where adventurers and lawless characters so often flock, which might have been otherwise made to suffer deeply from the fierce passions of those, who, wanting principle to restrain them, were only to be rendered innocuous to the community, by being compelled to expend their superabundant energies in contending with the stern and engrossing realities of life, common to rural sections of a new country.

But the advantages of the professional pursuits we are now considering, are by no means entirely of a negative kind, neither are they restricted in their operation, to one portion of our citizens. We need agriculturists of more than one class. The profession must, or should, become so highly respectable among us, that the intelligent and high minded young men of the nation, may find inducements presented for attaching them to its ranks. The improvements in husbandry, introduced of late years, through the medium of other branches of science, especially of practical mechanics, have a decided tendency to exalt the social as well as the intellectual privileges of one part of our population, of every grade, engaged in agricultural pursuits. On a moderately sized farm in this country, the profits are too small ordinarily, to permit the proprietor, to employ the aid of many hired hands abroad in the field, or within the domestic circle. Within the last twenty or thirty years however, the demands upon the time of the young male members of the family, as well as of the female portion, have been exceedingly lessened by mechanical improvements of various kinds. The threshing and winnowing machines have relieved the intelligent and active sons of our farmers no less than the carding, spinning and

weaving machines, have diminished the cares of their wives and daughters, and furnished them with leisure after the necessary routine of their respective duties has been passed through, which may be greatly conducive to their intellectual improvement. It is now by no means uncommon, to find works on botany, chemistry, and geology, occupying the attention of the young members of agricultural families during the long winter evenings, by which taste is refined, and the mind expanded, and the youthful agriculturists lays up a stock of information drawn from various sources, which may hereafter produce results most favorable to the advancement of this branch of science.

It has been too much the custom among members of the American community at large, to undervalue the profession, and to imagine the elements of character necessary to ensure respectability and success in its ranks, to be more moderate in kind and degree, than are required for the candidates of any of the learned professions. Accordingly, we often behold the least intellectual and promising son of a family, *sentenced* as a last resort, to the life of a farmer, because he is thought to be unfit for any other business. But this opinion is wholly erroneous, and calculated to be eminently injurious to the interests of our country. The qualifications necessary to constitute a scientific and yet practical and sound agriculturist, are by no means of an ordinary kind. He should possess that rare but most precious gift—a sound mind—no less than patience, forethought, perseverance and systematic habits; he should be sufficiently enlarged in his intellectual habits, to be freed from the dominion of prejudice, so that improvements suggested by other minds, may always obtain such impartial hearing and close scrutiny, even when they

conflict with his own previous notions, that he may never be found in the wake of the advanced movements in his peculiar department of science ; on the other hand, he should have decision enough to retain his own views, when reflection and experience have proved them correct, although his most intelligent neighbors may have fallen into the current of some plausible but theorizing agriculturist, whose unsound views, unsustained positions, and unwarranted anticipations, have led to the introduction of some new mania among his professional brethren.

It is interesting to note how many of the wisest minds, have been found in the class of practical agriculturists. Some of the most profound statesmen of England and of our own country, have been distinguished for the ardor with which they turned to rural pursuits, from the cares inseparable from the lives of those, placed near the helm of government, whether monarchical or republican.

The sagacious Cecil, Lord Burleigh, who so long and wisely swayed the cabinet, of Elizabeth of England, and to whose judgment and opinions she deferred more readily and constantly, than to those of any of her counsellors, was ardently attached to agricultural occupations. When his comprehensive and powerful mind, was overwhelmed by the cares of the cabinet, during one of the most trying periods of his country's national existence, then did he flee for relief, intellectual and physical, to his beloved Burleigh. So marked was his love for this rural residence, that it became by no means uncommon, for solicitors for court favor or preferment, as a matter of policy, to endeavor to propitiate the Prime Minister, by sending him presents of fruit trees, or grafts of rare varieties, which he was desirous to add to the collection of Burleigh. This taste became more and more permanent as he advanced in life,

and we are told on the authority of a cotemporary biographer that he thought it his greatest happiness and only greatness, to retire from the turmoil and cares of court and cabinet, that "he might ride privately in his garden upon his little mule, or lie a day or two at his little lodge at Theobalds."

"For personal purity, disinterestedness, integrity, and love of country, I have never known his equal;" was the testimony of the excellent Wilberforce in favor of his friend, the eminent statesman, Pitt. "His strictness in regard to truth, was astonishing, considering the station he had so long filled." This great man sought by the same means as Burleigh, to relieve the tension of mind and exhaustion of body, consequent upon the duties of the arduous post he filled in the British cabinet. An agricultural friend who was well fitted to judge of his abilities in this department of science, on one occasion assured Mr. Wilberforce, that he considered William Pitt "one of the first gentleman farmers in England."

Our own countrymen have furnished equally strong testimony, as to the practicability and expediency, of tempering the most profound knowledge of political and legal science, by a practical acquaintance with the realities of agricultural life. Washington, as was before remarked, took unmixed delight in such pursuits, and has left an interesting record in his own hand writing, of his attention to the practical details of farming. His crops were noted, both when planted and reaped, and he thought it not derogatory to the dignity of one, who had filled the highest official stations in the country, to inscribe in an almanac which was "interleaved with blank sheets, various memorandas relating to rural affairs in his own hand writing." These, one of his biographers transcribes, for the benefit of his youthful readers,

and to show them that attention to such matters "is not beneath the dignity of the man destined to wield the fortunes of his country."*

At the present hour, some of the most eminent among our citizens, may be found imitating the example of the great men, who have been already cited. The names of Daniel Webster and Henry Clay, have resounded to all parts of our own continent, and have become familiar to the ears of foreigners. It is well known however, that they are enthusiastic in their taste for rural life, and the former was born and bred in such scenes. During his late visit to England, he most opportunely took occasion at one of the large agricultural meetings of that great kingdom, in whose proceedings the titled and wealthy were united in interest with the sturdy yeomanry of the land, to offer an expression of the sympathies of American agriculturists with their brethren of the mother land. This manifestation of friendly feeling and national good will, was warmly responded to, by some of the leading men who took part in the proceedings of that interesting day, and it offers a pleasing presage of the happy effects which may result, from two great nations blending their sympathies on a subject of vital importance to both. Some of the states of northern Europe, have likewise recently made their agricultural societies, the organs for the exhibition of cordial good will and gratitude to our country. The corresponding professional bodies in America having manifested active kindness, and a disinterested desire for the fostering of a taste for rural pursuits, among the inhabitants of those kingdoms which elicited the expression of cordial kindness from them in return.

*Life of Washington by J. K. Paulding, chap. v.

Far be it from me to assert, that local circumstances can be invested with a power sufficient of itself, to transform the evil nature of man; or to believe the mere love of nature, can, as some of her enthusiastic admirers contend, "convert the gall of life, however bitter, into honey." But experience does undoubtedly prove, what the deductions of reason might lead us to expect, that those classes of every community, more especially the lower orders among them, whose occupation and converse are with nature, do secure to themselves a vast amount of positive good, and are likewise preserved from a great deal of positive evil, to which those are exposed, whose chief occupations and gratifications are derived from art.

The knowledge derived from converse with nature, is drawn from materials original and fresh from the hand of God, and while drinking in the lessons which she offers to us, the soul is preserved from innumerable malign influences, which float at large in the atmosphere of a crowded city. The productions of art, which are contemplated as matters of curiosity, or models of imitation, when excellent of their kind, are certainly well deserving of attentive consideration, and progressive improvement in them, serves to accelerate the march of civilization in a high degree, and is a barometer, by which its relative advancement may be measured; but at best, all the productions which come from the hand of man, have been made and fashioned to the extent of their perfectibility, only by artificers, having taken advantage of certain established laws of nature, and having applied them in conformity to the known proportions of the various material objects upon which they have been called to operate.

It is a certain and well established fact, that national attachments, are often found the strongest and most enduring

under circumstances which at first glance, might seem most unpropitious. The Icelander, simple in his tastes, and inured from early life to privations, under an ungenial climate and a soil rendered arid and unproductive in the extreme, by volcanic action; without property, save that which is invested in his scanty flocks and home-wrought apparel,—is yet found almost uniformly, with a heart glowing with ardent love to his native isle, and ever ready in the fulness and simplicity of his feelings, to declare his belief, that there is no land that the sun shines on comparable to it.

Similar manifestations of patriotic affection are discoverable in the inhabitants of the rural districts of Scotland, especially of her Highlands. The hardy Swiss, when surrounded by luxuries in a foreign land, finds his soul dying within him at the remembrance of his Alpine home, and of the scanty crops he gleaned by incredible toil, from the fertile spots which here and there beautified the mountain sides of his country. If we turn to Asia, we shall find the Persians and Turks sunk most generally in effeminate luxury and intellectual debasement, considering the labors of husbandry as alike degrading and uninviting. But glancing to another section of the same great division of the world, we note the pastoral Kurds. The contrast between them and the neighboring races, was strikingly manifest to the eyes of Mr. Southgate. When journeying towards Moush, he passed by one of their encampments, which he thus describes;—“Every thing about the tents and the people wore a neater and more thrifty appearance than is often found among the common population of the East. Their humerous flocks were seen feeding on the hill, and herds of borses in the vale. The men were large and robust, with fine open and cheerful countenances.

Most of the boys and girls were comely and some of them even handsome." And again in a distant section, when encountering more of this interesting race he remarks,— "We met at the foot of the hill, half a dozen Kurdish women, washing clothes in a brook which ran across our path. I was very agreeably moved at the sight of their cleanly appearance, their neat dress, their honest and open faces, and their frank though modest demeanor, after seeing so much of the women of the Persian villages, who would always run away tittering at the sight of our strange dresses. The vale before us, was covered with cotton fields, where women and children were employed in gathering the pods."

In the journal of his voyage along the coast of China, the Rev. Charles Gutzlaff gives some interesting facts, illustrative of the benign influence, which agricultural pursuits exert over a portion of the Chinese division of the vast Asiatic continent; while misery abounds pre-eminently, in the lower class of the commercial and manufacturing districts. "Along the banks of the Pei-ho" he observes, "are many villages and hamlets, and all are built of the same material and in the same style as at Ta-koo. Large fields of Barbadoes millet, pulse, and turnips were seen in the neighborhood; these were carefully cultivated and watered by women—*who enjoy more liberty here than in the southern provinces.* Even the very poorest of them were well dressed; but their feet were much cramped, which gave them a hobbling gait, and compelled them to use sticks when they walked. The young and rising population seemed to be very great. The implements of husbandry were very simple and even rude."

One of the evils to society, closely connected with the former part of the subject, has been deferred for consid-

eration, until the latter had been treated of, because the fact alluded to, involves positive advantages to the cause of agricultural science. I refer to the malign influence in respect to the health and longevity of our citizens, exerted by the different professions, arts and trades, by the exclusion which so many of them necessarily demand of their operatives, from invigorating air, wholesome exercise, and the unfettered use of all the limbs. Statistical calculations confirm the fact, that large cities are far more inimical to the physical well-being of our citizens, than the country. It has been asserted on good medical authority, that the average ratio of mortality among the inhabitants of New England is 1 in 70, while in the city of N. York, by no means an unfair example of the healthfulness of our cities, the average of many late years has been as 1 in 36. The impure atmosphere of crowded towns under ordinary circumstances in our warm seasons, affects the digestive and nervous system in a most sensible manner; but when this is combined with the sedentary habits, constrained position, or partial exertion of some parts of the frame to the neglect of others, which is the case with a large class of our city operatives, both male and female, the evil becomes immeasurably increased. The physical ills entailed on the large manufacturing districts of England, have long attracted the attention of her philanthropic and professional men, and various appeals have been made in their name, especially in behalf of the juvenile portion of these afflicted ones, whose pallid faces, attenuated and distorted limbs have powerfully excited public sympathy.*

*This subject is eloquently discussed in Southey's "Colloquies on the Progress of Society," to which the reader is referred for satisfactory information.

In our own country, the manufacturing system is established, I am happy to know, on a very different footing. The majority of the operatives being females from 14 or 15, to double that age, who with ready ingenuity, acquire the manipulative skill necessary for their various duties in a short time, and the majority of whom remain in the factories, only for a limited period. The influence on the moral interests of society exerted by the class of manufacturers in the two countries, is said likewise to be greatly in favor of America, so that the villages of New England most largely employed in such pursuits, are able to vie in purity of morals with those of any other portions of the Union. But America, it must be remembered, is comparatively young as a manufacturing country, and if these pursuits shall ever come to attain the same place with us that they do in England, we cannot but expect equally injurious consequences to result to the interests of society, here, as elsewhere.

Let it not then be forgotten by Americans, that while the various classes of our citizens whose pursuits have been considered, have each their specific department of labor under the national economy, yet have the agricultural class it is believed an especially important vocation to fill, in respect to the dearest interests of their native land. To them we must mainly look, for the preservation of that pure spirit of patriotism, the perpetuation of which, is so vitally important to national prosperity. For we have but to consult the records of other nations, of England especially, to learn that it has been the yeomanry of the country, who have been the earliest to detect the rise and progress of usurpation, and the most strenuous to maintain their opposition to it.

The interests of the mercantile and trading classes of the community, are frequently so interlinked with those of

their brethren in foreign lands, by the reciprocities common among those engaged in the same line of business, that the interests of their country are not unfrequently made subordinate in their minds, to the advancement of such, as are personal or professional. The Grecian patriots of ancient times, were accustomed to consider it essential to public virtue, that "the citizen was first anxious for the state, and only next for himself." With very many of the men of business in our cities, the reverse would seem to be the case, judging by their tone of conversation. Let our agriculturalists be stimulated by a sense of their peculiar responsibilities, and solemnly bear in mind this truth, that to them, under Providence, may be entrusted in an especial manner, the destinies of America. Those who are among our larger land proprietors may, by conscientious devotion to their duties, and by diligent improvement of their advantages, acquire an influence in their surrounding neighborhoods, in degree far exceeding what almost any other professional men can be able to secure. This is not unfrequently evinced by the selection of such as representatives in the congressional assembly of the nation, where they are enabled permanently and efficiently to promote the interests of their constituents, and the prosperity of America in general. But whether elected to this responsible post or not, our most respectable land holders should be assiduously exerting themselves for the advancement of agricultural science, and for such other branches of knowledge as have an especial bearing on their profession. They should beware, lest by too eager a desire for the accumulation of wealth, they so reduce the wages of those who labor for them, as to drive the more intelligent and active to other occupations, and so leave only the refuse and dross behind, to discharge the duties of hus-

bandry. Memory recalls at this moment, a large country tract, which in its neat little orchards, comfortable out-houses, and substantial improvements, showed the benignant effects resulting from the influence of one intelligent, high minded, enterprising agriculturist on the surrounding population, among the poor as well as rich. The latter especially looked up to him, as an oracle of professional wisdom and practical skill. His affable and considerate manners secured affection, while his dignity of mind commanded respect, and throughout not only his native county, but over the state, by conversation, and by correspondence, as well as by his own practice, he was continually conferring benefits of the most substantial kind, upon those engaged in pursuits similar to his own; thus proving how much might be done if such an example were to be universally followed by the scientific agriculturists of America.

CHAPTER XII.

FEMALE INFLUENCE EXERTED IN THE CHOICE OF PROFESSIONAL PURSUITS.

The penetration peculiar to the female sex, combined with the facilities which the long and intimate acquaintance and unreserved intercourse of domestic life alone admits, especially fit them for studying the characteristic traits of their relatives both young and old. In respect to the former, the opportunities afforded to them, far exceed those ordinarily possessed by teachers, who have seldom time, inclination, or facilities for analyzing closely, or can be expected continually to bear in mind, the elements which form the nature of their pupils, both moral and intellectual.

Children, undoubtedly manifest hereditary virtues, no less than hereditary vices, and mothers seem especially influential in transmitting both, since it is an interesting fact, that some of the most eminently useful characters that have ever appeared to dignify and bless the world, were honored in having had mothers whose, idiosyncrasies bore an especial resemblance to their own. Self scrutiny, had probably taught these females to know the peculiar features of their own characters. Reflection, combined with their own observation, had instructed them in the best mode of disciplining themselves. Penetration detected the germ of the same virtues, talents or weaknesses

in their children. Judgment decided on the expediency of applying the fruits of their own experience for the benefit of their offspring. Neither is it by hereditary tendencies to certain vices or virtues, and the judicious improvement, or abuse of a power entrusted to the mother, that the child may be led to resemble her. She is also capable to a great degree, of infusing into the minds of her offspring pleasures and tastes analagous to her own.

A field of duty is from these two considerations unfolded before the eye of a pious, intelligent, and affectionate mother! She should feel with a vastly increased power, the obligation resting on her, to analyze her own nature, and to cultivate herself, morally and intellectually, that she may be empowered more successfully and efficiently to train the objects of her fond affection! Self-improvement under this view will appear more desirable, more incumbent on her than ever!

If her children be sons, the intelligent and pious mother, should reflect well, on the various results to which peculiar constitutional developments may lead, in the respective stations which the two sexes are appointed to fill. Let me exemplify this, by an allusion to the history of our beloved Washington. His admirable mother, on whom the culture of his youthful nature devolved, was a woman of an elevated tone of feeling. High spirited, yet of great simplicity of manners, possessing great vigor and decision of understanding, she was unhesitating in her requirements of obedience from her children, who by her virtue, had been taught fondly to love her. She was remarkable for her undeviating varacity, and conscientious adherence to promises made by her, and scrupulous in the discharge of every relative duty. She early detected in her favorite son, the same traits which characterized her own nature,

and seeing these, she endeavored judiciously to train them for future excellence, by the same means which she had herself found most effectual. In her case, the sphere of exertion had been comparatively limited, she wisely foresaw the possibility of that of her son being greatly extended, and she prepared him to meet the exigencies in which he might be placed. She had herself found both pleasure and profit from reading, moral and religious writings of some of the old English classics; among these, the "Contemplations moral and divine," of the eminent Sir Matthew Hale was one of her especial favorites; and from its pages she was accustomed continually to read to her children, lessons of piety and wisdom. The high toned morality, which characterized those passages which she selected from this author, is thought, and not without reason, by one of his biographers, to have been especially influential in its effects upon the forming character of Washington.

A striking case, confirmatory of the deep moral power, which a mother fitted for her responsible post, may exercise over her child, in determining it to the choice of pursuits in which it is especially adapted to be useful, is furnished in the early history of Fellengburg. The great object of his existence, for the furtherance of which, he devoted his whole energies and his long life, were to determine by practical experiment, how far it may be practicable, to form the youthful character by early discipline and instruction; to implant in it moral and religious principles; to train it to virtuous habits and to intellectual, moral and civil excellence. Fellengburg was constrained to groan over the ferocities of human nature, when society became convulsed by the French revolution. He ardently loved his fellow creatures, and desired to promote their permanent happiness, by infusing into society a higher

tone of morality. He first essayed to influence the chief actors in the violent and tumultuous scene. They however, ridiculed, despised, and mistrusted him. He turned to the youthful members of the community, and pledged his talents, property and life, to prove by experiment, that what he proposed in theory was of practical application. His forty years labor at Hofroyl, was the experiment—the result is well known. It would be interesting, surely, to learn the spring from whence gushed forth this stream of pure benevolence to gladden and bless society. We find our curiosity gratified by a record in Fellenburg's own words of the most affecting kind. "I was," he states, "if I mistake not, only four years of age, when playing with a small cart, I was forced by its impulse down a steep declivity, towards a stream of sufficient depth to drown me. At the same time, I beheld my mother hastening to my assistance, and endeavoring to arrest the cart. I saw her extended upon the gravelly declivity, still persevering, although covered with blood, in her maternal efforts, without which I should have lost my life. The impression made by this act of devotedness, has never been effaced from my memory, or from my heart. I believe it contributed powerfully to direct me in that course of life which I have followed during the last forty years. It was eight years after this event, that I saw my mother holding a gazette, in the embrasure of a window in the castle of Wildestein in Argovie, where my father was prefect of the Government of Berne. I saw her weeping bitterly. I ran to entreat her to tell me what occasioned her tears. She at first answered, she could not tell me, because I should not be able to understand her. Upon my renewed entreaties, she said the Americans had lost a battle; and explained to me in a manner suited to the understanding

of a child of my age, the struggle between the English Government and the freemen of North America. The impression which this account, accompanied by my mother's tears, produced upon me, is among those which exerted a preponderating influence on my youthful development. I went a few years after with my mother to visit the castle of Koningsfelden, where the nobility of Austria, had conspired against the liberties of Switzerland, under the auspices of Queen Agnes. Here too, I saw contiguous to the castle, a house inhabited by insane persons, who had been generally brought to this state, by their bad conduct. The wretched aspect they presented, excited my compassion, and my mother seizing the favorable moment, withdrew with me into her chamber, and there made me take the most solemn vows, never to lose sight of the unfortunate, but always to assist them by all means in my power. After I had pronounced these vows, my mother knelt down beside me, and offered a fervent prayer, beseeching God to enable me to fulfil with fidelity, the resolution I had formed."

In a previous chapter, I ventured to assert the opinion, that the clergy of our country if faithful to their high trust, would be empowered by providence, to exert a mighty influence over the destinies of America. At this moment, from every quarter of our union, deep and stirring appeals are made by destitute congregations for pastors, by whom the bread of life may be broken to them. Again, eloquent accounts are given us by some pious individuals who have been compelled to find their homes far from the ordinances enjoyed in former days. These are often found mourning their destitution of spiritual privileges, and supplicating that some missionary servant of their Master may be sent to cheer their loneliness and

raise up an assembly and a house, to the glory of the Lord. In our long settled towns and villages too, the cry may continually be heard, that more able, devoted, and self-denying laborers may be sent to the field, which is every where white for the harvest. How terribly deficient is the church in ability to meet these different and repeated demands! For few comparatively among her sons, are preparing to come forward valiantly and efficiently, as ambassadors for Christ, as his "faithful soldiers and servants to their lives' end!" It may naturally be enquired how shall the deficiency be supplied? I reply,—Let American mothers of piety and intelligence, acquit themselves of their duty! Much! very much! may be effected by their efforts to prepare their sons for the ministry,—and their daughters to be the faithful wives of the clergy—accompanied by unremitting and special prayer to God for the accomplishment of their wishes.

A most useful lesson to the christian mothers of America is furnished in the history of the Rev. Leigh Richmond. His preaching was it is well known, eminently honored by God, and now, though the silvery tones of his voice may no longer be heard on earth,—yet while dead, he still liveth to preach, to persuade and to bless nations of various languages and habits, by the instrumentality of his writings. From the moment of his birth, his excellent mother made it a subject of special supplication to God, that her son might be honored by Him, in being called to the ministry. Throughout her whole plans of education, this idea was never lost sight of, and her every arrangement was made to bear upon it. Mrs. Richmond however, made no attempt injudiciously and unwisely to influence her child by stating to him her wishes on this point. She sought assiduously and faithfully to perform her part, and then by

constant prayer, rolled the cares and anxieties of her maternal bosom upon Him, whose prerogative it is to influence the hearts of men. Never was her son aware of the anxiety of his parent's mind, in regard to the choice of his profession, until she wrote a reply to the letter which he sent, apprizing her of his ordination. Few pious individuals will be found ready to question the fact, that it was principally by the instrumentality of this excellent woman that Leigh Richmond was determined in the choice of the sacred profession, in which he was destined to be blessed and also to become a blessing to innumerable souls.

The evils resulting from the pursuit of the *regular bargainer*, whether the object of exchange be lands, houses, merchandize, or live stock, have been felt widely throughout the union, more especially in the western states. The simple hearted and the honorable, have in numberless cases, become the dupes of the wily and designing; while an unfair bargainer has been often heard openly boasting of his skill in this respect. Mothers, I am convinced, have it in their power, greatly to check or encourage this propensity, which may often be seen developed in childhood. At that age, it can be checked decidedly in children. The desire of exchanging little articles possessed by them with advantage to themselves, begins early, and as early should be stifled. Sinful propensities are ripe in the young heart, and when a fond parent little anticipates such a trial, she may find to her sorrow, art and cunning, seeking to sway the minds of some among her little circle, in whom her heart has most deeply garnered up its affections.

A top, a marble, or a doll, unjustly gained by an unfair bargain, may be sufficient to foster a desire to make future experiments of a similar kind, on a more enlarged scale;

until by continual indulgence and success, the passion may become so inveterate, that the unfortunate victims of it may be induced to become speculators by profession!

The extent to which the influence of woman may be exerted in shaping the literary pursuits of our countrymen, can scarcely be measured, and may be exerted in various ways. They can study the peculiar talents of individuals, and incite them to exertions in those branches of literature, in which they give the promise of being specially fitted to instruct and to interest. By their conversation or epistolary writings they can waken springs of feeling and intellect which unconsciously to the possessor, may be slumbering within, and nerve him to make trial of his powers in directions towards which but for some such agency, he might never turn his attention. Or when genius shall be found impelled onward to some great literary undertaking, but with the humility so often the accompaniment of true greatness, may be cast down under discouragement and difficulties, then may the females of this country exert themselves in cheering the gifted objects of their affection in their hours of despondency, and thus encourage them to persevere in literary pursuits, by which not only the fame of American genius may be increased, but the happiness and prosperity of the country — under Providence, be effectually promoted.

The world would probably, never have been blessed by the poetical effusions of the author of the Task, had it not been for the discriminating female minds by whom he was surrounded, and who exerted a powerful and beneficial influence over this gifted being in his seasons of morbid religious and mental excitement, when his sensitive spirit was often made to writhe and agonize under the less delicate handling which he experienced from those of his own

sex. It is not improbable that on some occasion some among the American fair may also command the song, and thus wake the poetic fire in the breasts of some Cowper of their own land. The memoirs of the poet Crabbe, exhibit in scarcely less striking a manner, the power of female influence, in determining genius to the choice of literary pursuits, for which an especial adaptation was possessed. Had it not been for the encouragement which the object of his affections extended to him under the darkest seasons of his literary apprenticeship, Crabbe would never, as he acknowledged in his letters, have been roused so far from the despondency to which he was subjected in the early part of his London career, as to persevere in his poetical labors. It was after that time that the decided commendation of the cautious, and too often, prejudiced Johnson, was secured to him.

The eloquent historian of the Medici family, has furnished to the world an equally strong attestation of the influence of our sex, when exerted over a mind destined to eminence in another branch of literature.

Roscoe was ever ready to acknowledge his obligations to his mother, both in a moral and literary point of view, and when he selected his future wife, he found one who "felt with one heart, and judged with one mind, and looked to the same high and pure sources for happiness," as he did himself. When an opportunity was presented to this lady of visiting the British metropolis, she employed her limited pecuniary resources in gratifying the peculiar taste of her betrothed, by assisting him in collecting for his library such works as he specially needed, and by every means in her power exerted herself in strengthening and developing his literary resources.

The especial importance of public attention being directed to geological studies, has long been demonstrated plainly by many of our popular writers on the subject, and it is now no longer considered wise or expedient to restrict them exclusively to a few studious and philosophic minds. Experience too, has fully confirmed the same truth, since even among the enlightened population of New England, a great amount of money has been expended in attempts, based on the representations of the ill-informed or designing, to reach certain mineral veins, in various places which attempts a slight knowledge of geology, would have evinced to be wholly impracticable. Salt has been bored for by some, where its presence ought never reasonably to have been anticipated, and specimens of certain varieties of mica and pyrites, have lured on other luckless individuals to mining experiments in the vain expectation that tin, silver or gold would undoubtedly be found to reward their labors, and recompense them for their expenditure.

A mother of ordinary intelligence, can readily make herself sufficiently mistress of the elementary and general truths of geology, by the examination of some of the practical treatises on the subject, and by the aid of a collection of a limited number of simple minerals with their compounds, as to be able to inform and interest her children so far in the simple details of the science, as may at least preserve them from being ever tempted to embark on such quixotic undertakings, as those to which we have referred; and if the intellectual tendencies of any of them have a bias in that direction, they may not improbably from her instructions in the rudimental truths of geology, be induced to press onwards in these pursuits, and finally may furnish the scientific ranks of America with names, that may one

day vie in usefulness and celebrity, with those of Buckland or Cuvier.

The interest which a mother, aunt, or elder sister, is seen to take in the study of mineralogy, will insensibly be communicated to the group of juvenile intelligences who are accustomed to look to these, for instruction and amusement. I have seen a bright little spirit of between three and four years of age, closely intent on his petty mineralogical researches, in the gravel walk of his father's garden; while ever and anon, he would pick up a pebble in whose appearance he detected something different from the ordinary stones, and run gaily to exhibit his treasure, always prefacing its presentation by an enquiry, "whether it was jasper or only *silecious*;" the latter word having arrested his attention, and remained treasured in his memory.

Formerly, the study of Botany was almost exclusively confined to the medical profession, or to a limited number of philosophic minds, and accordingly the treatises on the subject were elaborate, and in many respects unsuitable to be placed in the hands of youth, and more especially of young females. Even so lately as at the close of the last century, we find the great and good Sir William Jones, bewailing to a friend the obstruction which closed the path of botanical pursuits, to young and delicate female minds. But this delightful science has become at the present time a favorite with the young, refined, and delicate of our sex, and introductory publications on a plan, easy, practical and comprehensive, are now readily procurable by the ladies of our country who desire to be initiated into this branch of knowledge. Mothers may now with facility carry their little ones abroad among the beauties of nature to collect in spring, summer, or autumn, the treasures of rock, field, and bower; or they may during

the icy reign of winter, teach them to attempt the first imitation of their beauties with the pencil or paint brush. While doing so, they will encourage habits of observation, and excite a laudable curiosity in the breasts of their children, gratify a taste for the beautiful, and kindle likewise admiration for the contriving skill and infinite wisdom which characterize that portion of the Almighty's works, with which botany is conversant. Daughters, no less than sons, may be influenced by maternal wisdom and love, in the selection of the interesting pursuits of natural science, which may prove alike salutary to them individually, and beneficial to the country. A vast amount of evil might have been averted from society, had the mothers of families been more assiduous in furnishing legitimate and yet interesting occupation for their offspring of both sexes. Young minds were not formed for idleness, and generally speaking, are not ripened and disciplined sufficiently, to render long seasons of meditation and solitary reflection, wholesome or expedient. Botany, mineralogy, and conchology, present each an interesting field, by which habits of exercise in the open air may be strengthened, and the employment rendered more exhilarating, or conversation round the fire-side made more interesting, and home more happy. The want of artificial stimulants will then not be felt, and works of fiction which have destroyed so many young and promising females, will not be looked to as a resource to relieve existence from the *ennui* so common to unoccupied or undisciplined minds. In some little group of our juvenile population now following with glad-some steps in the path of their mother on some rural expedition, to which a love of natural science has imparted a charm, there may be fostering agencies whose inquiries

may one day furnish new acquisitions to science, or augment our national resources.

As the sphere of observation enlarges, and the power of comprehension strengthens, objects of attention will be continually multiplying, by which opportunities will be presented to the maternal mind, for exercising judgment, and testing the capacities and peculiar talents, and of determining the future pursuits of her children. The furniture of her nursery alone, may, if attention be properly directed to its construction, afford facilities for introducing simple lessons on natural philosophy, level to juvenile comprehension. The ardent gaze, which one of her little ones directs on a clear evening, to the deep azure vault, studded with stars and planets, may serve as an introduction to the noble science of Astronomy, which can be rendered interesting before books on the subject, can, with propriety, be placed in the hands of children. Men first began to study Astronomy by personal observations on the heavens, and they did so, long before treatises on the subject appeared in the world. So likewise now, may we give much preliminary information to our children, by which their young sympathies may be enlisted permanently in favor of this branch of Natural Science, while they are yet in the nursery, and their minds are unprepared to enter upon the regular study of Astronomy in books. This science, like those last named, is open to the female, no less than to her more aspiring companion in creation. One of the most eminent astronomers of England at the present moment, is, it is well known, the celebrated Mrs. Somerville; a lady who adorns domestic life, it is said no less eminently by her feminine graces, than she has enriched science by her discoveries.

The history of our gifted countryman, Benjamin West, has furnished his countrywomen with another fact to prove that the approbation of female relatives can encourage the ardent desires of the youthful mind, and confirm those tastes, by which professional pursuits may be hereafter decided,—a favorite art enriched with new specimens of beauty, and personal reputation secured, on an imperishable basis so far as time is concerned. Young West while acting the part of a nurse at the cradle of his infant niece, it may be recollect, was first moved to exercise his imitative powers by sketching her sleeping beauties. When surprised by his mother and sister, he sought precipitately to conceal his rude sketch; but not so quickly but that the fond relatives were able to recognize "little Sally," with her plump infantine features, and express their delight at the likeness which they detected. After this, the little boy hesitated not in their presence to continue his sketchings, cheered on by their sympathy and encouraging words. Repeated trials, enabled him to use his pencil with more facility, so that he was soon able to exhibit drawings of a superior kind, by which the attention of a benevolent stranger was directed to him; patronage was secured, and he was enabled successfully to prosecute his studies in foreign countries, and to perfect himself in his favorite art.

Attention has been specially directed to the importance of the agricultural class of society to the prosperity of America. Here we may find an opening peculiarly happy for the exercise of female influence. For I believe there is no secular pursuit to which children are more readily impelled by tastes imbibed from the maternal mind, and fostered by its example, than that to which I now refer. Reference has been made to the passion for rural occupa-

tions, which Lord Burleigh evinced throughout his long life. He inherited this taste from his mother, who was the heiress of a country gentleman of Lincolnshire, and remarkable for the energy and skill with which she attended to the practical details of agricultural life. She early initiated Cecil in the same habits, and when he became Lord Burleigh, she transferred her local interest to the rural abode of her distinguished son, and during his lengthened seasons of absence from that favorite spot, she kept a careful watch over all his farming operations.

American women can undoubtedly be greatly instrumental in encouraging a taste for similar pursuits. There has been observable of late years, a growing effeminacy and distaste for rural life among our females. In numberless instances, when sons, and more especially husbands, have been found disposed to throw themselves into the ranks of this profession, opposition has been made by the ladies of the family, which has been so perseveringly maintained, that concurrence with their wishes has been secured. Mothers too, have been known repeatedly and positively forbidding their daughters to listen to overtures of marriage from members of the agricultural class. The life has been declared too hard for young females brought up delicately, and who have been unused to any domestic exertion. Here then to a certain degree, may be dated the origin of an evil now felt widely in our community;—the want of an intelligent, cultivated and respectable body of agriculturists. I am well aware that in America, and especially in her Western States, there are trials incident to rural life, operating perhaps with peculiar severity on the females who have their lot cast in its ranks, which are not felt at all to the same extent in other countries. But two alternatives we have before us, of neither of which

we should be unmindful. Either the interests of the country must be vitally injured by the growing distaste observable in the higher ranks of our citizens for agricultural life, or the females of America must rouse themselves and their offspring energetically, from this state of luxurious indulgence into which they are too generally sinking. They can by example correct a mistaken idea, which is becoming, alas! increasingly prevalent, that prompt attention to the details of domestic and rural economy, is derogatory to the dignity or respectability of our sex. It is perfectly compatible with the preservation of feminine refinement, and the cultivation of true politeness to cherish a taste for country life, even under circumstances which involve a necessity, for personal and active exertion in the homely occupations of the spinning-wheel and the dairy.

In innumerable cases disease would be averted, and cheerful enjoyment greatly promoted in the family circle, if a portion of time was devoted to healthful, active occupations. I have known young ladies who were continually subject to depression of spirits, urged to rouse themselves to domestic exertion; to take their places for a time at the churn or ironing table, or to apply the broom and dust brush;—when the reply has been made by them that these employments would spoil the delicacy of their hands and impair their whiteness. Alas! that rational beings can hesitate for such considerations, to perform a bounden duty, or can throw the burden of life upon an infirm parent, for the gratification of mere personal vanity.

When daughters of parents in affluent circumstances, have been thus wisely trained, should Providence permit them to remain in the same scenes which their mothers have filled, their knowledge of domestic economy will even then, never come amiss. They will be better qualified

to direct, for having been taught how household duties should be discharged. But when, as is frequently the case, the child in her providential allotment, presents a complete contrast to that of her mother, and from a childhood spent under the influences of city associations, passes to the discharge of the conjugal and maternal relations in rural scenes,—perhaps amidst the stern realities of western life,—deeply and fervently she will be made to bless the mother, whose wise affection prepared her for reverses of scene and circumstances.

Most unfortunate and reprehensible I conceive it to be, when the wives and daughters of our citizens, allow themselves to render gloomy and discontented the path of agricultural life, which by their husbands and fathers, has been selected on conscientious motives, and perhaps from necessity, by perpetually indulging craving desires after city indulgences, or peevish complaints of country duties. Let them on the contrary, endeavor to render home increasingly attractive by the cheerful recognition of the numberless charms connected with their allotted station, and which have only to be sought for sedulously, in order to their being enjoyed heartily, by the best and wisest of mankind.

“Who that ever joined him in it,” said a friend of Wilberforce, “cannot see him as he walked round his garden at Highwood. Now in animated and even playful conversation, and then drawing from his copious pockets some favorite volume or other. A Psalter, a Horace, a Shakespeare, or Cowper, and reading or reciting, or refreshing himself in passages; and then catching at long stored flower leaves, as the wind blew them from the pages, or standing before a favorite Gum Cistus to repair the loss. Then he would point out the harmony of the

tints, the beauty of the pencilling, the perfection of the coloring, and run up into all those aspirations of praise to the Almighty, which were ever welling up from his grateful heart. He loved flowers with all the simple delight of childhood! He would hover from bed to bed over his favorites, and when he came in even from his shortest walks, he deposited a few that he had gathered safely in his room before he joined the breakfast table. Often would he say, as he enjoyed their fragrance, "How good God is to us! Surely flowers are the smiles of his goodness!"

Let it be the aim of the females of America, of those especially among them, whose lot has been by God cast in rural scenes,—to cultivate such a love for horticultural pursuits, on christian principles, as the holy and benevolent Wilberforce evinced. It will give increased charm to domestic life, and furnish an additional bond of sympathy between the members of the family circle, who are of different sexes; and surely it cannot on every account but prove instrumental, in elevating the character and tone of feeling among their countrymen, who are filling the ranks of the agricultural profession.

CHAPTER XIII.

INFLUENCE OF FEMALES ON AMERICAN SOCIETY AT LARGE.

In enforcing the claims of America upon her daughters, I have hitherto chiefly restricted my remarks to those obligations imposed by the peculiarly favorable opportunities presented to them, for the exercise of influence in the domestic and social relations. But I should not complete the design I have sketched out for myself, in the present work, were I not in this concluding chapter, to make an attempt to call the attention of my countrywomen to obligations of another kind, which have been only indirectly presented for their consideration, in the previous parts of this work. Many are found readily admitting that their country has claims upon them in their social relations, as wives, mothers, sisters, daughters, &c., who are yet not willing to concede that responsibilities of a solemn kind are also entrusted to them, in respect to the extent to which they are capable of determining the state of American society in many important particulars.

In this moment of national peril however, American females should be on the alert, in contributing according to their utmost ability, and with all their energy, their quota, as co-workers with the Governor of the universe, towards the saving of our Union. Our several States, we believe, depend most materially for their well-being, nay,

perhaps for their very existence as a permanent confederacy, on the influence of those commissioned to labor for the moral regeneration of society.

The character of the influence which those American females are to exert who are to be national *conservatives* in the largest sense, has been previously pointed out in this work, and it is that which must ever be borne in mind, if success be desired in her efforts by any woman. We have had lessons given us in a most pointed manner for our practical guidance, by many distinguished females of the present and past century, who in different countries of Europe have been permitted to prove, that it is only by a regular conscientious conformity to the course prescribed to them by the Almighty, that women can fulfil their high destiny.

Let us glance at Europe for our own instruction. We find women no where unsexing themselves as it were, by attempting to revolutionize society by force, but in France and other European countries where the codes of religion have been, and are still strikingly defective. The part enacted by the market women of Paris, *les dames aux halles*, as they were called, in the sanguinary scenes of the French Revolution, is well known. Ferocious in appearance, and reckless in character, they moved among the troubled elements of society only for evil, and with demoniac fury, brandished weapons in their hands, broke open magazines of arms, and made the streets to flow with blood!

Passing on from this class of females, we find another, far more highly gifted in mind and acquirements, but who yet sought to accomplish their cherished purposes on a plan, essentially different from that prescribed to woman in *her station*. Among these, one of the most remarkable

was Madame Roland, who though distinguished as an advocate of liberty among the Girondist party, could yet with a generous magnanimity, plead the cause of a proscribed and persecuted prince. This celebrated female possessed strong intellect, and many fine natural elements of character, but her moral nature had been cultured on no better principles than could be furnished, by the defective and dangerous system of French philosophy. Her husband was not ashamed to be known to receive assistance from her stronger mind, in writing public papers and dispatches. Her house was the resort of the wits and politicians of the day, and her lofty and daring nature, which scorned all selfish and mercenary policy, and was ever ready to kindle with enthusiasm, being characterized also for great intellectual acuteness, fitted her to become as she did, the soul of the Girondist party. But let us enquire whether Madame Roland, amiable as she was in many respects, and gifted with mental endowments, succeeded in securing what her sanguine expectations anticipated? She was guillotined in the cause of liberty, and expired while apostrophizing it in pathetic language; she wrote in defence of her favorite passion; but—she accomplished nothing for the happiness or well-being of society!

Madame de Staél has been pronounced by an able writer, as having been “perhaps the only woman whom a majority of competent judges would place in the first order of human talent.” She may be taken indeed as the most favorable specimen that could probably be selected, of the class of females whose influence upon society is derived from intellectuality of character alone, unsanctified by religion. Unlike Madame Roland, Charlotte Corday, and other enthusiastic advocates of the same school, whose

powers of fascination chiefly fitted them to be effective agents in the unwholesome atmosphere of philosophic and ultra republicanism,—Madame de Staél was from natural endowments and great acquirements, prepared to captivate the more sober-minded and elevated ranks of English society. Indeed not a few of the highest order of masculine minds, during her visit to Great Britain, were found readily yielding her the palm for eloquence, in conversation and on paper. Fox and Pitt, differing as they did on many occasions, were yet heard concurring in the assertion, that the suggestions offered by Madame de Staél's mind, might be listened to with advantage by the legislators of a great empire;—the sagacious Sir Samuel Romilly, as the representative of the band of able legal practitioners, made a similar acknowledgment of her capabilities of influencing another important class of citizens, by her extraordinary intellectuality. Nay, so great was the deference in which she was held, and so vast the intellectual power she was supposed to wield over public opinion in defence of liberty, that even the conqueror of a world, trembled at the obstructions she might oppose to his designs, and hesitated not, at length, to treat her with a rigor scarcely equalled in modern times. He condemned her person to exile, and her works to the stern censorship of his directors of the press, though her mind superior to fear, and undaunted by persecution, could not be held in chains by the tyrant, but sent forth its appeals notwithstanding, in language more and more thrilling. In these publications, she displayed remarkable discrimination, in detecting the motives which were influencing the leading politicians of the day, and the greatest readiness in unveiling character, and in suggesting remedies for the relief of existing evils.

Upon the secular literature of the age, more especially on that of her own country, Madame de Stael undoubtedly exercised a considerable power, and she introduced new tastes among her own nation; she was greatly instrumental in banishing that illiberality among the literati of France, for which they had been previously so remarkable, since before her time, a departure by an author from the ancient models of composition, was certain to entail severe treatment on himself.

But when we enquire as to the results of her influence upon society, we are met by no gratifying statements. As a moral agent, she was wholly unsuccessful both in public and private life. Her friends at Geneva represent her, as having been amiable in her deportment in retirement, but as a mother, she exerted little or no influence of a salutary kind. While even Wilberforce, habituated as he was to self-government, acknowledges in his Diary, that he found the atmosphere of Madame de Stael's society so unwholesome to him, as a Christian, that after being exposed to her fascination once, he dared not from conscientious motives, incur the risk a second time, though she made repeated efforts to attract him as a constant member of her London coterie, and in despite of his repeatedly declining such invitations, felt constrained in one of her most popular works, to pay a flattering tribute to him.*

If we enquire, why this gifted female failed to secure a powerful or lasting influence of a conservative kind on society, we shall find the reason I believe, to be this;—she

* "L'homme, le plus aimé et le plus considéré de toute l'Angleterre est M. Wilberforce, put à peine se faire tant les applaudissements courraient sa voix." [Considerations sur la Révolution Française.]

never attempted to act upon its elements, as God designed the sex to do, by infusing into them the regenerating power of religion, but contented herself with substituting in place of christian ethics, her own devised system of moral philosophy.

But cold in its character, and illy adapted to meet the exigencies of man's condition, or to advance the best interests of society, was the system adopted by Madame de Stael. "Friendship, parental, filial and conjugal affections, and with some characters, religion, have many of the *inconveniences* of the passions;" was the language uttered by her. Instead of seeking to foster these virtuous emotions of man's nature, or to strengthen religious feelings, she represented both as conduced to his highest happiness, only when acting in a modified manner. They were indeed admitted by her, to be superior to the impulses of passion, and the spirit of party, but were ranked as inferior in their bearing on human happiness to "that class of resources which men carry within their own bosoms." She sent forth no benign influence on the morals of society while living, nor was her death-bed illumined by joy or peace, nor will any of the multitude who listened to the tones of her finely modulated voice, or have read her writings, ever rise hereafter to bless God for the privilege!

At the present moment, many American females we believe, are contemplating with intense anxiety, many germs of evil which have long shown themselves struggling in the elements of society, both political and private in this country, and which only require to be developed fully, in order to spread devastation around. With dispositions sanguine and imaginative, and with judgments not perfectly sound, they may be picturing to themselves, a day of brighter

hopes as yet to dawn, and with the same ardent enthusiasm which characterized the female republicans of France, may be hoping to take a part in the political regeneration of their country, somewhat similar to those enacted by Roland, Corday, or de Stael.

Those characters have been held up to view in these pages, chiefly because they may be considered not as isolated examples, but rather as generic heads of distinct classes of female minds, who it is believed, may continue to act upon society, here as elsewhere. Let us take warning by their failure, and especially hers, whose intellectual endowments were so superior to those usually met with in our sex. If the gifted one, who rested on the efforts of mind alone, to accomplish her patriotic desires, failed, because she sought not strength in that quarter, where woman was alone designed to obtain it, in securing success to her philanthropic purposes,—then surely those among us, who feel the same ardent longing to benefit their country that she did, should not anticipate greater success, while they are conscious, that like her, they are relying on intellectual worldly resources alone, which they cannot but feel are greatly inferior to hers.

But let not the hearts of American women faint within them, neither let them sink into hopeless despondency, because certain channels for relieving the desolation of society, are closed to our sex. If the history of some gifted females, are to serve as beacons to warn others not to strike on the same shoals on which they made shipwreck, surely it will not be improper to encourage ourselves in our ardent desires to benefit society, by contemplating some who succeeded in filling up their lives with duty and usefulness, and who were permitted to see of the fruit of their exertions, before they departed to their

rest, and others, who still live to bless, purify and adorn society.

The example of Hannah More is one that American women may well study in order to profit by it, since it is perfectly compatible for many of them in the same manner, though not perhaps to the same degree, to become also, benefactresses to their country. Madame de Staél's influence on society, was, we have seen, unusually slight to what might have been expected; but hundreds, thousands, and tens of thousands of her fellow creatures in her own land, and throughout Protestant Christendom, have raised their voices readily and gratefully, and others are continually rising to swell the chorus, ascribing obligations to her, who under Providence, was permitted to accomplish so much, and to effect such mighty changes for good, on society at large. But her warmest admirers cannot realize them all, until they may be permitted, face to face, to meet her on the Great Day, when the Lord of Glory, shall, before an assembled Universe, greet her with the welcome of, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord!" Then shall be made known *all the good* which this one female disciple, while laboring *in her station*, was permitted to effect! She solved a problem which before had been thought difficult, by showing practically how possible it is, to unite the graces of the gospel demanded from woman, and the excellences of an enlightened domestic economist, with the labors of authorship, and the exertions of true patriotism and philanthropy. She accomplished a great amount of good individually, in early life, by her labors, as an instructress in her celebrated seminary; in after years, by her consistent and holy example, her edifying conversation, her self-denying exertions in re-claiming the ignorant and degraded in her

village schools, and last, though not least, by the voluminous, and yet ever practically moral and religious productions of her pen.

In ancient Rome women were awarded public honors, because when the city had been assailed by rude, savage hordes, who were encamped about its walls, some of their sex, had cheerfully and voluntarily brought their ornaments of gold and silver, to compose an offering where-with an exemption was secured from the physical ills that assailed their country. Surely then, it is not without reason that the women of Protestant England, have received a blessing from their country, when it is remembered, that she, when assailed with far more dangerous foes, than those which menaced Rome,—the infuriated and malignant forces of infidel France, who sought with equal earnestness, to poison the morals and subjugate the persons of their enemies,—found it has been asserted on good authority, no force so effectual in frustrating these nefarious designs, as that exerted by the writings of Hannah More! Impressive indeed, is the thought, that in the privacy of domestic life, and frequently in the chamber of disease and on the bed of suffering, were prepared by a meek, christian female, the artillery which proved so effective, when brought into operation! From the cottages of Cowslip Green and Barley Wood, were continually sent forth, during the lapse of years, intelligent and thrilling appeals to the various ranks of Britons. With extraordinary powers of adaptation, she addressed, with equal effect the inmates of palaces and castles, and the humble inhabitants of cottages, workshops, and manufac-tories. Without violating the proprieties of female character in the smallest degree, or employing any weapons, but those allowed to women by their Maker, this holy ser-

vant of God, whom two continents have risen up to honor, was permitted to be one of the chief instruments, in rearing round the Island Empire, a bulwark, against which the darts of Satan, when wielded by the factious and the infidel, could not prevail.

American females may draw a most profitable lesson from her example; and let it ever be remembered, that if they hope to succeed in their labors, as Hannah More did, their *moral*s, like hers, must be *christian*, and their *piety*, *practical*. We have a large band of nominally female christians among us, but their minds should be stirred up by the thought that there are dangers peculiar to the religious world, in particular *crises* of its history. At the present time, perhaps there are none which menace the healthfulness and vitality of female piety more than the tendency so prevalent, especially in our large cities, to overrate *active duties* of religion, to the neglect or partial over-looking of such as the Bible teaches us to be *practically* binding on all the disciples of the Saviour. There is a pleasurable excitement arising from the consciousness of being personally instrumental in ameliorating the social and physical ills of our fellow creatures, which frequently incites to benevolent exertion, many who are not at all prepared to receive the humbling truths of the Gospel in their full extent. The discharge of these active duties, has also a tendency to strengthen to a certain extent, self-righteousness, which as a plague spot, will cling long to the heart of even true christians, while it acts as an opiate to the unconverted. Far be it from me, to undervalue the good works of the benevolent; I desire not that these may be left *undone*, but that other things still more essential may be *done* also. Far greater vigilance should be exhibited by our christian females, in attending to closet

duties, so absolutely essential to the maintenance of true piety. The Bible should be more earnestly, prayerfully, and habitually read and meditated on, so that its precious truths might be more thoroughly inwrought in the soul, and the meek and quiet fruits of holiness might be more manifest in the daily walk and conversation. There is, we fear, more talking about, and arguing for, religion, observable in many of our christian coteries of females at the present day, than there is of secret and habitual communion in the chambers of the same, when the doors thereof are shut. There is too much going after popular preachers, and laudatory commendations of them, than there is of effort to walk habitually and closely with the Lord — of the communing of the heart with Him in retirement and in *stillness*.

Moses was commanded to take off his shoes, in token of reverence, when he was to draw near the flaming bush, in which the Lord was to manifest himself. Isaiah fell on his face, and exclaimed in the language of deep self-abasement, "I am unclean — I am unclean," when the vision of the Deity "high and lifted up," was granted to him; but it is by no means uncommon at the present moment, to bear nominally professing females, nay, even those who are just entering on womanhood, discussing with volubility, and even flippancy, grave theological questions, and giving their decisions on points of doctrine, in almost the same manner as they would their opinions on the most ordinary topics. My female readers, these things ought not so to be! While such continues to be the practice of its professors, we have no right to expect that our females will ever exert a really benign and important influence on society.

It would be unjust while holding up the eminently useful Hannah More, as an example for those of our females

who aspire to be serviceable to their country at large, to pass by the excellent Elizabeth Fry, who while laboring in her vocation, has showed the world how powerful a moral agent, a meek and holy christian female may become. The spirit which animated Madame Roland, while she sought to reform society through the medium of the leaders of the republican party of France, was of such a kind, as would have been in character, with the heroines of pagan Rome. Such too, was that which armed Charlotte Corday with a poniard, and sent her into the palace of a despot, in hopes of crushing tyranny in his person. But the secret spring of all the heroic labors of Elizabeth Fry, was that principle of action authorized by God, and by virtue of which, He foresaw that woman in her physical weakness, might go forth alone, and unprotected by human arm, to the help of the Lord in reforming society.

If the work of regeneration has been carried on, and who can deny that it has, in the loathsome prison, among the very lowest and abandoned of our race, whose habits of vice had heretofore been regarded as incorrigible, and whose consciences had been supposed too obdurate to admit of softening, by the assiduous exertion of a meek christian female, armed with no authority, but that with which consciousness of rectitude invests the subject of it, and with no weapon save that of the Sword of the spirit, which is the word of God, then surely it is not without reason, that the christian females of America, are incited to duty and encouraged to hope, that they too, may be eminently serviceable, as reformers of the evils of society! But let it never be forgotten, that the example of the admirable Mrs. Fry, teaches us forcibly, the importance of female consistency in the discharge of all the duties of our station. She took no distorted views of the moral agency entrusted

to her sex, when she entered upon her mission of benevolence to the lost and vicious. She relaxed not her attention to the holy duties of private devotion; neither did she excuse herself from the fulfilment of domestic duties. The latter were not left undone, because public and arduous demands were imposed on her. Those who have been privileged to see her, in her own delightful residence, and surrounded by her large family, attest that there, no less than in the walls of Newgate, does she shine by a conscientious, enlightened, and faithful discharge of her duties, as a christian and a woman.

Thus the armour with which religion invests its female disciples, is that alone, in which they may say with confidence, "we come to conflict with ye,— the giant evils of society, in the name of the Lord of Hosts, whom ye have defied." But it confers other advantages on women. It immensely extends the facilities to the sex at large, for operating benignly upon society. Were female agency restricted to intellectual or physical exertions alone, the larger portion of them would be precluded almost entirely from the hope of having their influence extended beyond the narrow pale of the social circle. But inasmuch as the fine coloring and proportion of character, of the pious female, is the effect of spiritual light derived from the Sun of Righteousness, it will be equally manifest in the flower which blooms on the lowly village glade, and in those of the rich parterre, which have been subjected to the most favorable culture. In other words, while it would be preposterous to suppose that the females in the lowly walks of life, should or could ever become influential by their intellectuality or acquirements, in reforming any of the abuses of society, yet the character of Elizabeth Wallbridge the daughter of an obscure cottager in England

has, in the memorial given of her by Leigh Richmond, shone forth with a light so beauteous and remarkable, as to become the means of illuminating the inhabitants of various countries, tribes and languages. Little Jane the Cottager, a babe as she was in years, and Poor Sarah, the unlettered and ignorant Indian, have by the power of divine grace, reflected on them, done more by God's blessing, in reforming society, than Plato, Aristotle or Socrates did, for their most cherished pupils.

Thus if christian females, sincerely desire to exert a regenerating influence on society, they *shall do it*, provided they be found habitually shining by their example, as *lights in the Lord*, since it is an essential property of spiritual as well as of natural light, to be reflecting and refracting its rays, even through an interposing medium.

The social, civil, and religious interests of society in this country; are at this moment endangered by a formidable foe, who has planted his feet within the legislative halls of our country, and even inside the church of God. "Gold," saith the Son of Sirach, "hath been the ruin of many; it is a stumbling block to every one that sacrificeth to it. Blessed is the rich that is found without blemish, and that *hath not gone after gold!*" Happy, I would say, is the woman, whose conscience testifies that she is entitled to receive the benediction here recorded! Not only will her personal enjoyments be immeasurably increased thereby, but her moral agency will be rendered truly beneficial to others. "The love of money is the root of all evil," is the solemn language of the oracle of truth; and it is equally so to nations, as to individuals. History holds up her warning voice. She points to Carthage and other ancient nations, who were hurried on to premature decay, by "going after gold." She turns then to ancient Rome

and reminds us how much longer she was permitted to survive her rival, because she had sternly denounced the influence of this insidious demon. It may be confidently asserted, that whenever this passion has been allowed to sway the minds of a people, patriotism and moral excellence have uniformly declined among them. It is in childhood that this evil can be most effectually combatted, and therefore it is to woman the moral guardian of youth, that society looks anxiously for the checking of it in their hearts. The money-loving spirit threatens at this moment to blight the civil and political, as well as the religious and social interests of America. A young generation is rapidly rising up to fill the places of their parents. Let them be trained to habits of frugality, simplicity, and economy. The females of America, may by their dignified and christian example, in the selection of their friends, and by their whole deportment, manifest that wealth is not to them of paramount importance. The favor of the rich and powerful should not be incessantly and exclusively sought after, while the esteem of the pious and wise, however moderate their circumstances, should be represented as a most precious possession.

Mothers who are themselves indulging perhaps almost unconsciously, the pernicious passion for worldly aggrandizement, and by their examples, if not by their precepts, are infusing the same tastes into the hearts of their children, will exert a most malign influence upon society through the medium of their own personal character, as well as that of their offspring of both sexes. Whatever the professional or business pursuit of men may be, their usefulness as men and patriots, will be immeasurably lessened in every case, where the thirst for gold has found lodgement in the soul. Such individuals, like the Upas

tree, will in proportion to their superiority of standing among their fellows, diffuse more and more, a poisonous influence through the surrounding atmosphere. If once the passion is formed, no individual filling either of the ranks of the secular professions, can hope to find it neutralized in its malign operation, by being conjoined in his character, with great intellectual superiority, or exalted scientific or literary attainments, since the mind even of Bacon, was so perverted on some occasions by the suggestions of avarice, as to cause the lustre and usefulness of his character to be thereby greatly impaired. By the same evil spirit, have numbers among our commercial and mechanical classes been lured on to speculations fraught with misery to society, which have been likewise the cause of ruin to the individuals themselves.

Females professing godliness, should especially bear in mind that they also may be led to sacrifice to this idol, when they little dream of their danger. By so doing, they will sadly injure the objects of their affection, subjected by them to a pernicious influence. Considerations of the hardships, toils and poverty, so generally the boon assigned to those filling the ministerial office in our country, not unfrequently sway the minds of female relatives, who are thereby induced to exert their powers of suasion, in deterring their sons, husbands, or brothers, from becoming candidates for the ministry; while on far more numerous occasions, after this step has been taken by their relatives, when some call to the discharge of the sacred functions is received by them, entreaties, nay tears are resorted to by pious women, in the hope of persuading to a rejection of certain overtures, because the means of support offered, seem in their opinion, so precarious or insufficient, as to present to the ambassadors of Christ no other prospects

than of following their Master's steps, in poverty and self-denial.

Thus society in a vital point, may be affected by the perverted influence even of pious women. I would exhort my christian countrywomen, in view of this subject, to beware of habituating their children of either sex, to associate ideas of hardships or unmitigated suffering, with the office of the ministry, whether its duties are to be exercised at home, or in foreign missionary fields. It is indeed, God alone, who should give the call to serve at his altar, and women may not rashly, or with self-will, presume to persuade their relatives, Uzzah like, to lay their hands on the ark of God, when He has given them personally, no intimations of such being His intentions in respect to them. But it is proper and fitting, for christian females who see "the field, which is the world," whitening for the harvest, while so few appear as its reapers,— to hold up for the consideration of their relatives, and of the young among them especially, the honorable priveleges of those who are consecrated to God's service in the sacred office. And when His Spirit, with its sanctifying power, shall descend upon the head, and move the heart of some in their respective domestic circles, so that they desire to become ministers of Christ, or female missionaries, mistaken tenderness, ought not to presume to oppose the intimations of the divine will, from consideration of temporal ease and emoluments, being so generally withholden from that class of society among us.

The healthful tone of moral feeling susceptible of being exerted through another channel by the personal influence of mothers, and by means of other female offspring, is at the present time practically demonstrated throughout Protestant Christendom. The innumerable institutions

therein established for the physical and moral nurture of the large band of orphans, who, but for such asylums, might at this moment, have entered upon a career calculated to darken still more deeply the face of society, have originated, we believe, uniformly in the pious bosoms of females, and have continued to be indebted to the benevolent exertions of the same sex, for their prosperity and efficiency. The asylums for widows also, have been founded almost exclusively in the same manner. By far the larger portion of the teachers in our secular and Sunday Schools, are likewise of our sex. If the Sunday School is to be considered according to the judgment of some of our wisest male citizens, one of the most powerful engines in operation for the moral regeneration of the christianized world, then on this principle, in accordance with God's special design in the creation of our sex, pious and enlightened females may at this present moment, be quietly but effectively influencing by this means, society throughout our union.

Our country calls imperatively for the erection of new Churches throughout her borders. She urges the necessity which exists, for increased exertions in the missionary field; tracts are also loudly demanded to meet the exigencies of the times. To all these appeals, our females have been most ready to respond, for it is a fact well attested to, by many of our clergy, that when they, in discharge of the duties of their office, call upon those whose "hearts are stirred up, and whose spirit is made willing" to bring offerings for the service of God, in these various operations, none come in larger bodies, or with more willing hearts, than the pious females of their flocks!

Scripture uniformly represents the observance of the Sabbath as a point of christian duty vitally important, on

the observance of which, the highest interests of individuals and of nations, are essentially dependent. The commotions, civil and political, by which the surface of society is continually convulsed, when traced up to the fountain head, will most generally be found, to have originated in those who are habitual Sabbath breakers; and it is by no means an uncommon occurrence for the leaders in these disturbances, to select the day appointed by God for a season of rest, as the most fitting time in which to collect the factious and unprincipled, and to organize them into bodies for the better securing of their evil designs. During a period of this kind in England, January, 1817, Wilberforce wrote to one of his friends, "We are here in the midst of plots, but a gracious Providence, I trust, watches over us." "We are not to divulge, but this much I may say, that the seizure of the ringleaders, when assembled on Sunday last, prevented much bloodshed from the Spa Fields on Monday. Hunt seems a foolish mischief making fellow, but no conspirator, though the tool of worse and deeper villains. Cobbett is the most pernicious of all: but God will bless and keep us, I fear not, and it is highly gratifying that all the *truly religious classes have nothing to do with the seditious proceedings.* The blasphemous songs and papers of the seditious will disgust all who have any religion or decency." The most truly great and wise among us, as in England, have generally been keepers of the Sabbath; and we believe it may be safely asserted, that just in proportion as the commandment to reverence it and keep it, is conscientiously and regularly observed by nations or individuals, will be the extent of moral power possessed by them. Our own country has been greatly scandalized by the desecration of the Sabbath, by numbers of her citizens being accustomed to select this holy time

for travelling, some of whom have been more highly culpable than others, from the fact of their filling places of a conspicuous kind, so that the evil of their example has become greatly increased and widened, while from the circumstance of their enjoying greater leisure or a less pressing necessity for exertion, than the members of the lower orders of society, far less palliation can be offered in their behalf. I rejoice to learn that at the present time, strong exertions are being made by several leading Rail Road and Steamboat Companies, for the suppression of the evil, by their coming to a determination in their official capacities, to prohibit the farther continuance of travelling on the Lord's Day. Some stockholders of Companies by whom the breach of this commandment, has been hitherto permitted from views of the policy of the practice in a pecuniary point of view, are nominally professing christians. They may have indeed, found their gold and silver multiplied thereby, but they may have already felt "a curse resting on their very blessings," because they have not hearkened to the voice of the Lord, to keep, or permit to be kept by others, the holy day of rest, while they continued ignorant of the cause of the infliction. If the observance of the Sabbath has uniformly been found to exert a favorable moral influence on individuals and on nations, so also may the interests of society be improved in another point of view, by the beneficial effects produced from the same cause, on the physical and intellectual natures of its members. Medical men who come to the consideration of this subject with impartial minds, are ready to assert, that setting aside religious considerations, the cessation from physical and intellectual toil, has a powerful tendency to promote the welfare of the human race. The tension on the brain, in members of the professional and political classes

of society, caused by six days of labor, no less than the exhaustion of the muscles of the body, observable in the working classes, demand for the preservation of bodily health and intellectual activity, a day of relaxation from toil,—a day of rest like that which God has appointed. If the Sabbath be not kept as a religious institution, these important blessings will not be secured; the professional classes will in that case, allow the anxieties and cares of secular business, to obtrude into their minds, and strain their reasoning powers, even while their persons are excluded from its haunts. “I often told Castelreigh,” was the remark of Wilberforce on hearing of the suicide of that nobleman, “that he would destroy himself far before his time, if he would allow his mind no rest on the Sabbath. No mind can stand such a constant strain upon its powers with impunity.”

That the conscientious exercise of religious duty, and the habitual practice of meditating upon its elevated truths, has a powerful tendency to elevate the intellectual powers, is a fact, admitted openly by many candid minds, who are not themselves pious, while it is tacitly acknowledged by others. Perhaps no layman of modern times has exerted a more benign influence on society, than did the gentleman whose name has been lately quoted. “If,” says Southey, “there was ever a good and happy man on earth, it was Wilberforce.” Madame de Staél’s strong testimony on the same point has been already cited. While the suppression of the slave trade was a subject of animated discussion, Fox generously asserted, “that the cause should be left in Wilberforce’s hand, and would come from him with more weight, authority and probability of success, than from any other individual.” The statement of this eminent Christian in respect to his own character,

shows forcibly the increased moral power conferred by true religion on its disciples. "The first four years of my life" said he "I did nothing. My own distinction was my darling object." When he became a Christian, he wrote on the contrary,— "God Almighty sets before me two great objects,— the suppression of the slave trade and the reformation of manners." It was, his son asserts, the fear of God, which armed him as the champion of the liberty of man. "We are apt," remarked the eloquent Sir J. McIntosh, "petulantly to express our wonder, that so much exertion should be necessary to suppress such flagrant injustice. The more just reflection will be, that a short period in the short life of one man, is when well and wisely directed, sufficient to remedy the miseries of ages. Benevolence has hitherto been too often disheartened by frequent failures; hundreds and thousands will be animated by Mr. Wilberforce's example, by his success, (and let me use the word in the moral sense of preserving his example) by a renown that can only perish with the world, to attack all the forms of corruption and cruelty that scourge society. 'Oh what a twenty years in the life of one man, were those which abolished the Slave trade. How valuable and dignified human life, which in general appears so base and miserable.'"

It may seem to my readers, that I am wandering from my subject. But I have digressed not without a design. I have dwelt upon the case of Wilberforce, the holy and consistent christian, who in the midst of the hurry and bustle of political life, and the excitement of election times, could and did, turn away his thoughts entirely from such subjects, when the first day of the week came, and kept the Sabbath, even at such a time, holy to the end;— in order to prove by the example of one man, how much

may be done for society by those who are called to the exercise of moral agency over its youthful members under circumstances, of all others the most favorable for success. It is in infancy that human beings can be best trained to the observance of the Sabbath. That is the season when holy associations connected with it can most readily be formed, and the conscience can be habituated to fear its desecration. Women have not only wider opportunities for operating favorably in this manner, but greater facilities also. They can generally adapt religious instruction, more readily to the minds of children, and make it practically more attractive.

On these points females in the higher and lower ranks meet, as it were, on a level. Society requires for its security, that its members of all classes be indoctrinated into the truths of God's word, and be trained to obedience to his commands. In the stall of an English cobbler, was conceived the sublime idea of attempting the conversion of the Hindoo nation to Christianity. Nor was the notion allowed to remain passive in the mind. Dr. Carey, originally a poor cobbler, became the father of Protestant missions in Hindoostan;—the spiritual parent to numbers of his race. In his widely extended labors for the amelioration of evils of the most obdurate kind, let women in humble life in our country, learn what they may do for its highest interests by means of the influence which they can maintain over the hearts of their children.

We are informed on good authority, that in the year 1787 Lady Middleton, the wife of Sir Charles Middleton, an intimate friend of Wilberforce, and a lady of great piety and intelligence, became so deeply interested in the subject of the Slave trade, that she could take no rest until she persuaded her husband to write to his friend, entreating

him to become the champion of the oppressed. He had indeed, previously considered the subject long and deeply, yet after receiving Lady Middleton's appeal, he felt constrained *to act*. He himself admitted that the impulse given by his fair friend, was one among many, which constrained him to yield himself to this great work. When the work of reform may seem too formidable or unappropriate for women to become leaders in it, let them think of Lady Middleton and seek to accomplish what they desire, by suggesting their views and wishes to some male mind, fitted for the work, or let them like the mother of Fellenburg, keep the subject before the minds of their sons from infancy.

By Selina Countess of Huntington, have the religious interests of society been greatly and permanently affected. The loss of a beloved husband having deeply afflicted her, while in the possession of youth, beauty, and great wealth, that lady sought consolation in religion, and withdrew from the world of fashion, in spite of every allurement offered to her. To her strong intellectuality of character, even the witty and infidel Horace Walpole was constrained to bear testimony. She found the tone of feeling at that period prevalent in the Church of England, too languid and formal to satisfy a heart which thirsted after the living God. She joined the Methodist Society, and was greatly instrumental in freeing it from the odium which had been attached to it by the Established Church. By meekness and wisdom of character, she led many of her former religious associates to admire and imitate the christian zeal and sanctity of life which she manifested, and it is said on good authority, that she was one of the most efficient instruments in stirring up the Established Church to that newness of spiritual life which it subsequently ex-

hibited. More than 100,000 pounds she expended in deeds of benevolence.

In a former chapter, while treating of the duties assigned to women in their station, the influence which they were empowered to exert as directresses of public taste, was adverted to. The subject may be more fully considered at this time, since the operation of this evil upon society at large, is greater than is supposed by many of our sex. During the troublous times we have of late passed through, since the monied concerns of the country have been so greatly disordered, forgeries have been numerous, embezzlements of public and private property have become evils of frequent occurrence, robberies have greatly increased, and suicide has become increasingly common. Could the causes of this unhappy declension in public morals be known, they could often be traced up to perverted female influence. Many of the mothers of our country have failed to train aright their offspring of both sexes. Their daughters have been frequently so habituated to self-indulgence, that at length when they have become wives and mothers, they have learned to rebel at having any restraint imposed on their luxurious tastes, and by their solicitations for indulgence, have too frequently hurried on to the commission of crimes, their male relatives, whose moral principles had not been duly strengthened in early life. The financial concerns of our national government, are, it is true, exclusively consigned to the control of the other sex, but it is no less notorious, that the expenditure and arrangements of families are almost as generally regulated by our females.

Fashion, that popular divinity, whose sway extends widely in a descending line, is uniformly personified in a female form, as if with our sex it had most intimate con-

nexion. The laws which govern society, and the usages which obtain from their enforcement, are conventional, and most generally on the points now under consideration, originate with females. The ambitious and luxuriant spirit of a few ladies of fashion or beauty, in either of the rival kingdoms of France or England, has in this manner, by the abuse of one of the privileges of our sex, been made too often, widely injurious to society in those countries, and in our own likewise. To the swiftest sail which crosses the Atlantic, is often committed a precious deposite,—a model of some late fashion introduced in Europe, and which has had its archetype in the brain of some fair leader of the ton, in London or Paris. On its arrival on our shores, it would seem as if some aerial messengers were employed in its dissemination, so quickly, and as it were, simultaneously, is it diffused through every portion of our wide spread union.

Could the moral evils which have resulted to society from this cause alone, be accurately registered, an aggregate would be presented, which might appal the consciences of many American females, who may hitherto have thoughtlessly and passively allowed themselves to accelerate the movements, and give increased momentum to the power whose devastating effects, when flowing forth upon society, have been by them, never accurately measured, though attested alike by revelation, history, and experience. The professing christian females of our country, I would respectfully admonish on this point, since it is one in which a large proportion of them are too ready to conform to the example of people of the world.

The desire for some new article of fashionable attire, may be accompanied with no emotions powerful enough to rouse the consciences of those of the wealthier class of

females, who are unused to probe their principles and motives; neither may the gratification of their wishes lead them to a dereliction from duty. But let them remember that by their example, they may stir up in the breasts of others of their sex, treading their way through poverty and toil, such craving and inordinate desires for indulgences on an inferior scale, conforming to the same fashion, that in many cases the latter may be stimulated to dishonest modes of securing the desired objects, and in others, may be led to sacrifice all that by woman should be held most dear.

The commercial and manufacturing interests of our country are also capable of being acted on to a considerable extent by women, in their vocation as directresses of public taste. It might at first sight seem a matter of trivial importance, of what fabric the collars and caps of our ladies should be made of; and yet when fashion legislated on these minor parts of the female wardrobe some years since in England, by requiring that the articles of merchandise formerly used for these purposes, should give place to a new one called bobbinet, experience proved that a change in this trifling point, introduced by a few British females, could mightily affect the manufacturing and commercial interests throughout a great kingdom. In less than a year after bobbinet came into vogue, it is stated that 600,000 of the machines employed in its fabrication, were brought into operation, and artizans previously compelled to labor in manufacturing establishments, were enabled to carry on their labors under their own roofs; the machinery requisite for weaving bobbinet, being so simple in its construction, as to require little capital to purchase, or skill to manage. When this fabric suddenly superseded muslin in the favor of the ladies, the mercantile classes of the community of

different grades, who had invested funds in merchandize of the latter kind, felt sensibly the consequences flowing from its proscription. What had ceased to be fashionable, was no longer saleable, unless at a great sacrifice, and I have been informed that bankruptcies in some cases, and in many others, great business embarrassments ensued, from this one cause alone.

To form a rule of action for ourselves on the subject of dress, is an undertaking by no means devoid of difficulty, but it is certainly far from being an impracticable one to those who are accustomed to draw their principles from one unerring standard. Even in a republican country like our own, I conceive it would be impracticable and impolitic, if it were not so, to abolish entirely, by conventional usages, the distinctions which have obtained in the different classes of society, in respect to dress. I know of no such attempt having been made in a country whose population was at the time, in a healthful state of moral feeling. France during the last century, made the experiment openly, but the circumstances under which the change was suggested, and the means employed for enforcing equality among her citizens on this point, indicate morbid excitement, rather than soundness of feeling, to have actuated the public mind at the time.

American females can exert a far more salutary influence on society by endeavoring each for herself, to regulate conscientiously, personal and household expenditures, agreeably to the circumstances in which God has placed her, and by evincing such moderation, as will lead her habitually, to keep within her resources, instead of venturing to exceed them.

Fashion attempts to legislate upon American manners in other points, and to enforce her requirements, calls in

the aid of women. Among her capricious and arbitrary decisions, she has pronounced that a knowledge of domestic economy, is unimportant, and a practical discharge of the duties growing out of it, is indicative of the absence of refined tastes, and unfavorable to lady-like manners. Such opinions have originated in the Old world, where society appears under another aspect, from that presented in the New, and where a necessity for such knowledge, is to a certain extent, obviated by the superiority in the trained domestics, whom foreign ladies may call to their aid. American females in the very highest walks of life, should remember that a regard to their true dignity and moral efficiency, ought to incite them to strive after a thorough comprehension of their domestic, as well as of their relative duties, and to seek cheerfully to discharge both. The claims of the former kind, will be more or less pressing, under changing seasons and circumstances. It not unfrequently happens that American females who have been brought up delicately, in the more luxurious regions of our Eastern or Western States, are subsequently transferred to sections of the country where no facilities are within reach for procuring domestics. Personal attendance upon the dairy and in the kitchen, and a practical acquaintance with the arts of the seamstress and taillorress, have often been demanded from those, whose early years were passed in ease and self-indulgence. If individuals thus situated, wish to diffuse peace and comfort around, they will not allow the suggestions of *false taste*, to render them unmindful of their duty, but will rather exert themselves with alacrity, in acquiring knowledge, which under their circumstances will be rendered necessary and desirable. If a false pride causes the spirits to sink, and a blush to mantle the cheek at such moments, let them remember

that Elizabeth Woodville, subsequently raised to the throne by Edward IV., informs the readers of her diary, with what diligence she milked the cows of her father, who was an English baronet, while Isabel of Castile, and Livia, the wife of Augustus, were not ashamed, but rather took pride in making the garments in which their husbands appeared in public.

In the diffusion of a sound and healthful literary taste in this country, females may likewise find an important field for usefulness. They may exert their influence in the attainment of this desirable object, both directly and indirectly. Their intercourse with society will present frequent opportunities to them by the medium of conversation, of decidedly but meekly checking a false and pernicious literary *taste*. Inexperienced male minds may be greatly injured by the tone of female conversation in this respect. Vanity in some instances, and in others, indecision of character, and an improper estimate of the opinions of the objects of public admiration, render young men oftentimes exceedingly sensitive to ridicule, or to witty remarks from women who occupy prominent places in genteel society. Finding that in order to secure admiration, it is necessary to be *au fait* in the fashionable literature of the day, young male aspirants for the honors of polished life, too frequently lay aside for a season, sound and healthful reading, calculated to invigorate the mental frame, and by skimming over the last new novel, endeavor in the most effectual manner, to prepare themselves for the evening assembly, until the habit of resorting to these unnatural intellectual stimulants, becomes more and more fixed. The taste for fiction, and that of the most exceptionable kind, is evidently not on the decrease among us, for while our publishers are compelled in many instances

to restrict their business operations from a dread that the expenses of new and valuable publications may not be met by demands from the reading public, there seems little risk encountered, or thought of, in sending forth throughout our country, swarms of novels, whose literary pretensions may be indeed superior to works of the same class issued in former days, but whose moral character is in no respect less reprehensible. While the youth of both sexes are liable to receive injury in the most vital points, by the exercise of perverted influence of females, to whose opinions they may in the intercourse of society be accustomed to defer, those of the male sex are especially susceptible to harm from such a state of things. It is a point of no little importance in securing the morals of society, that men, and especially young men, be accustomed to associate ideas of purity of sentiment and practice, with the female image. Some of the most grossly licentious and infidel minds, have, by their own acknowledgments, been awed and checked in the manifestation of their vicious propensities, by the very presence, and still more by the pure and meek deportment of one modest female. Byron and the younger Lord Lyttleton both made such assertions, and there is no reason to suppose the feeling exhibited by them were peculiar. On the contrary, many who sympathize with them in viciousness of manners, may be heard broaching the same opinion. It is however very evident that those females who scruple not to discuss with animation in public, the merits of works of fiction, in which impurity of sentiments and laxity of morals are defended in the characters of the heroes or heroines, are effectually exerting themselves to break down the barrier which has hitherto guarded society against the irruptions of the most deadly evils; for can it be supposed that women of genuine modesty will

be able to find pleasure in reading or freely speaking of works, the tone of sentiment insinuated throughout which, is decidedly impure; and will it be a matter of surprise, if dissolute men, or inexperienced youth, learn to distrust the moral worth of the sex at large, from finding practical proofs of the absence of it in individual cases.

Women may also exert a powerful influence on American society, in a literary point of view, by enlisting their pens in the diffusion of a healthful tone of sentiment, both moral and intellectual. It is a subject for thankfulness to American hearts, that not one of our female writers has lent her aid to advocate vice, or to break down the ramparts which guard the social and civil interests of our Union; on the contrary, the majority of our authoresses are decidedly moral writers, while not a few may deserve the epithet of christians.

In respect to the mode by which women are empowered indirectly, to exert a great influence in shaping the literary taste of the country, much has been said in previous chapters of this work, while throwing out hints for the intellectual nurture of youth. The females of America while admitting the claims made on them in respect to their relative and social duties, may, and should be deeply moved by a solemn consideration of the manner in which their faithfulness or negligence in discharging obligations, may tell upon the future literary interests of the nation at large. Cuvier it is well known, effected important changes in the scientific world. Nay, it may be said to have revolutionized it, in certain important branches in both hemispheres, by her discoveries in fossil geology, comparative anatomy and natural history. His unwearied activity of mind and deep research,—his ready discrimination of scientific truths, and the lucid manner in which he embodied

information amassed by himself for the benefit of others, have placed him at the head of the body of philosophic naturalists. The important benefits conferred by him as a great champion of intellectual truth, were greatly enhanced by one interesting particular; he sought to bring all the resources of his capacious mind, with the treasures which he collected in his scientific researches, and laid them as appropriate offerings at the footstel of the Creator. In life, and in death,—for his dying testimony to the same effect was given in an impressive manner to the college of France,—he acknowledged that religious and scientific truth should, and could ever be made to harmonize essentially. But it was female intellectuality that developed the mind of Cuvier,—and female piety that sought habitually to leaven his whole character with the same precious materials. At his mother's knee, was the favorite station of the delicate boy, whose history in after life, was destined to be so closely connected with the literary improvement of society. Madame Cuvier at the same time that she was forming her son's intellectual character, strove to cultivate his taste for the study of the Word of God. Female influence was thus exerted over him in early life in the hope of securing his highest interests;—while his closing years were gilded by the presence of his lovely and pious daughter, whose incessant prayers as we have seen, were poured forth, for the accomplishment of what lay nearest her heart,—the thorough conversion of her father.

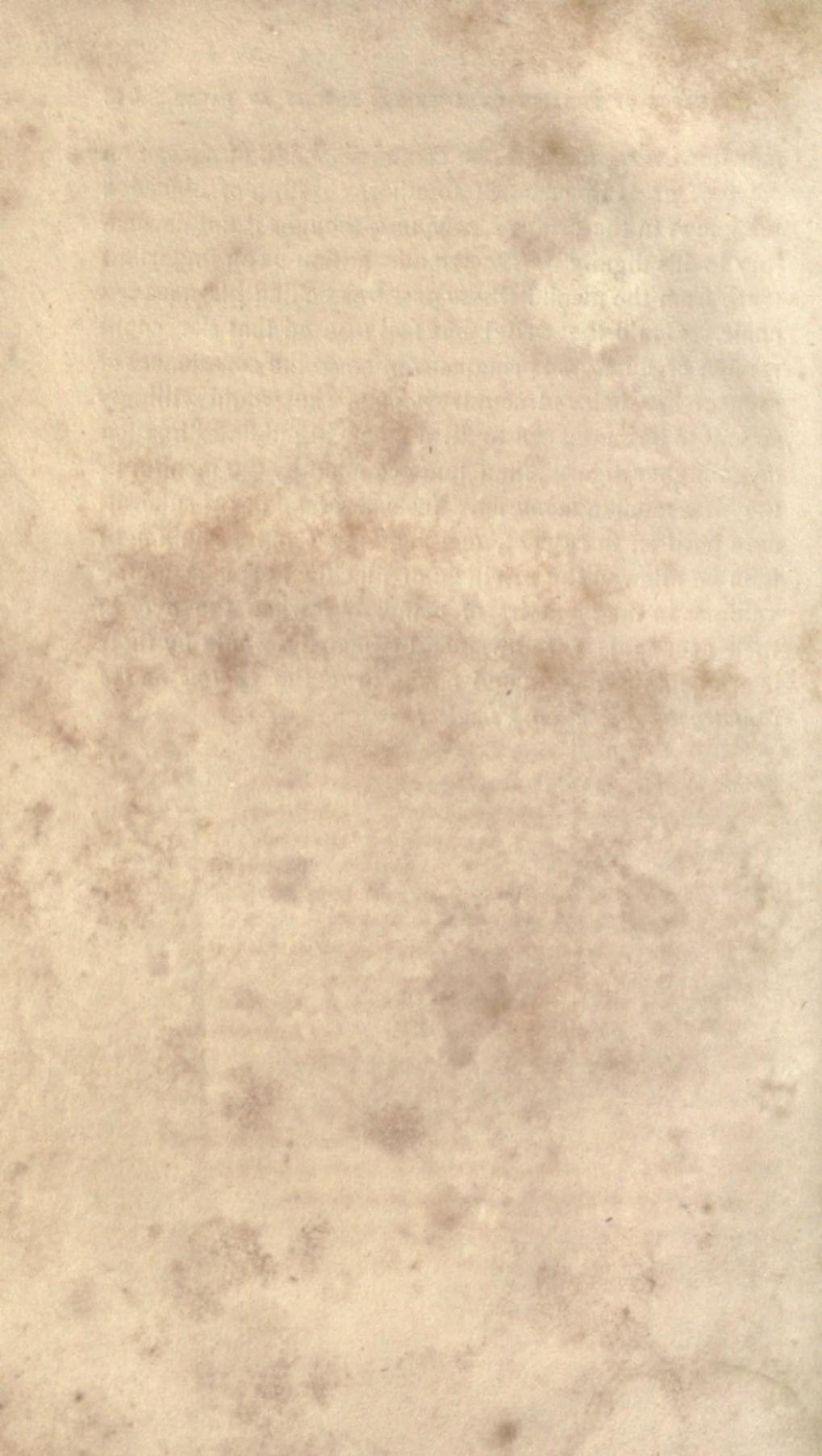
It was by the instrumentality of his wife that the celebrated naturalist Huber, was enabled to overcome the obstacles which impeded his progress in the peculiar field of scientific research, towards which his natural tastes impelled him. By the loss of his visual powers, society was

nearly deprived of the aid of one fitted to enrich her with treasures of information, when Madame Huber became the means of averting the evil. For forty years this great naturalist was enabled to make observations on the insect kingdom, through the medium of his wife's eyes. She walked daily with him;—while she remarked whatever was worthy of notice, and reported it to her husband. Her heart was ever awake to sympathize in his peculiar tastes, and her intellectual powers were quickened into lively exercise to further his favorite pursuits; while her pen was on all occasions ready to embody the suggestions of his fine mind, for the benefit of a world. "While she lived," he was wont feelingly to exclaim, "I was not sensible of what my misfortune was in being blind!"

That the political interests of society are susceptible of great improvements from the operation of sound female influence, exerted in an indirect manner, has been asserted repeatedly, and had we no other proof than that furnished in the history of our own immortal Washington, it would alone be sufficient. On a retired plantation of Virginia, was a work carried on, by the blessing of God sanctifying female exertion, the benign effects resulting from which, America has felt to her inmost soul. Her destiny would have been widely different, had Mary the mother of Washington never lived, or had she lived unfaithful to her solemn trust.

In conclusion, the writer of the foregoing pages may have seemed unwarrantably trespassing on the time and attention of her readers, while attempting by this lengthened appeal, to stimulate her countrywomen, and herself to a serious consideration of the strong claims which the land of our birth and affections, has upon our sex in this eventful crisis of its history. The humblest individual

may however, sometimes be commissioned to discharge an office of great importance to others. Philip of Macedon we know, in the pride of conquest, thought it not derogatory to his dignity to receive admonition or an important truth from the menial whose post was behind his master's chair. Could the writer but feel assured that she could remind of duty, and bring conviction to the consciences of some of her beloved countrywomen, she would willingly submit to be sentenced to fill a place in public estimation of no higher dignity, than that occupied by the monitor of the Macedonian monarch. Instead of taking a subordinate position in respect, one individual only, she might then be allowed the privilege of placing her unassuming volumes in the boudoirs of many, and when the eyes of their occupants were directed to them, she would by their instrumentality, again and again, urge the *Claims of the Country on American Females!*

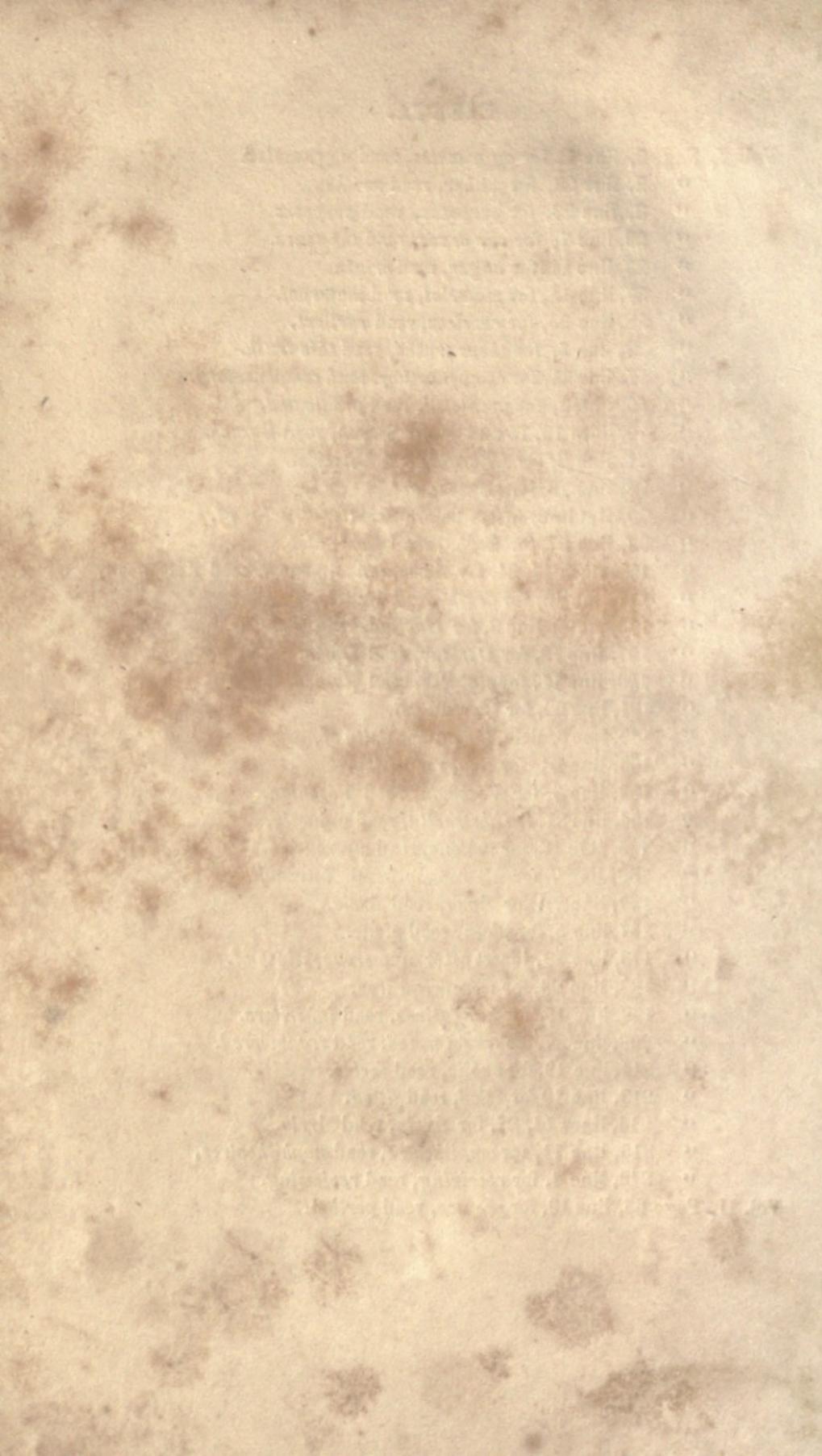


ERRATA.

Vol. I, Page 2, line 1, for *aggravates*, read *aggravated*.

- " 2, line 20, for *wi:her*, read *writhe*.
- " 8, line 23, for *purposos*, read *purposes*.
- " 20, line 7, for *our sexes*, read *the sexes*.
- " 23, line 14, for *anger*, read *origin*.
- " 37, line 15, for *material*, read *maternal*.
- " 38, line 20, for *careless*, read *earliest*.
- " 39, line 5, for *these truths*, read *this truth*.
- " 57, line 21, for *compensating*, read *compensatory*.
- " 59, line 8, for *predicted*, read *predicated*.
- " 70, lines 10, 15 and 24, for *Barah*, read *Barach*.
- " 71, line 8, for *Nitorus*, read *Nitocris*.
- " 72, line 16, for *its*, read *a*.
- " 73, last line, insert before *derotional*, *value of*.
- " 93, line 27, for *Zepha*, read *Zephaniah*.
- " 108, lines 14, 24, for *Asmonian*, *Amonean* read *Asmonean*.
- " 111, line 18, for *death*, read *breast*.
- " 125, Note; line 3, for *Gacilus*, read *Tacitus*.
- " 127, line 12, for *Dorians*, read *Doric*.
- " 129, line 11, for *stat .tes*, read *statues*.
- " 131, line 22, for *if*, read *yet*.
- " 149, line 6, *dele*, *the authenticity of*.
- " 150, line 24, for *liry*, read *Livy*.
- " 153, line 6, for *Vocoman*, read *Voconian*.
- " 154, line 31, for *abstractly*, read *unjustly*.
- " 156, line 16, for *matons*, read *matrons*.
- " 158, line 7 for *Matronaha*, read *Matronalia*.
- " 163, line 27, for *Avua*, read *Arria*.
- " 167, line 5, for *plain*, read *plane*.
- " 173, line 29, insert after *numerous*, *wives of*.
- " 185, line 23, for *were*, read *was*.
- " 198, line 15, for *inheratives*, read *inheritors*.
- " 203, line 27, for *transformed*, read *transferred*.
- " 211, line 10, for *public*, read *feeble*.
- " 213, line 10 for *filled*, read *fitted*.
- " 214, lines 14, 27, for *Avria*, read *Arria*.
- " 215, line 11, for *ampitheatre*, read *amphitheatres*,
- " 242, line 4, for *receiving*, read *reviewing*.

Vol. II, Page 65, line 13, for *preface*, read *portion*.





















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